

ρ LIVING Will that shalt endure
when all that seems shall suffer shock,
rise in the spiritual rock,
flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,

that we may lift from out of dust
a voice as unto Him that hears,
a cry above the conquer'd years
to One that with us works, and trust

with faith, that comes of self-control,
the truths that never can be proved
until we close with all we loved,
and all we flow from, soul in soul.

THE LETTER
OF
THE LARGER HOPE:

BEING A
RENDERING INTO MODERN ENGLISH
OF
THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL
OF
ST. PETER.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
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TO
SEARCHERS FOR TRUTH,
AND
TO THE GREATER GLORY
OF
H I M
WHO IS
THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE,
THIS
LITTLE BOOK
IS
THANKFULLY DEDICATED.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS little volume is, I believe, the first work on Biblical criticism and explanation ever brought out in South Australia. It was printed in King William Street, Adelaide, two years ago, for the use of the author's friends. The names of the street and city recall to our minds a time which now seems far away, a time before the days of her present Majesty the Queen. Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, was planned out and begun in the year 1836, when William IV. and his consort still sat on the throne. It is good to find that amidst the stir and restlessness of so young a community there is still leisure for a serious and loving study of the Bible, and for an attempt to bring the love of God therein revealed to men more distinctly home to our hearts.

Each age and clime must have its own way of regarding the problems of faith and life ; and this little book, too, bears signs of the influences active on the other side of the globe. It is the outcome of old Oxford training, combined with the new life of a fast-growing colony. To get at the true sense ; to bring out the broader hopes, the deeper faith of those who are far away from many of the ancient influences of an older civilization ; to clothe the heaven-sent thoughts in 'modern English,' a language often cumbrous and involved, which deliberately sets aside all technical terms bearing theological meanings encrusted on them ; even to resist the temptation of using the phrases endeared to us by use and age, because they are so often wrongly coloured by the hand of time, or by the violence of unhappy controversies—in a word, to secure, by a fresh and unconventional rendering, attention to the real and intrinsic meaning of St. Peter's letter, has been the primary

task and endeavour of our author. With a view to this, Mr. Owen has often gone somewhat out of his way, substituting what we must confess is a clumsy paraphrase for a term impregnated with later meanings ; as, for example, when we have for the oft-recurring 'grace' the phrase 'the free gift' ; or 'forth-tellers' in place of 'prophets,' and 'glad tidings' for 'gospel' ; or, again, when, with more uncertain propriety, the unusual phrase λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν is rendered 'a people for preservation,' instead of the vague 'peculiar people' of the Authorized Version.

The consequence of such changes, and of a praiseworthy effort to overcome the difficulties which beset the rendering of the Greek propositions, and to give full and accurate force to the datives, and like matters, is a certain cumbrousness and embarrassment of style certain to jar on those who are familiar with the stately and melodious flow of our English Bible. Still, we can say of this translation what an intelligent Engineer officer once said to me about the Revised Version. 'I have forgotten my Greek,' he said, 'and am hardly scholar enough to feel the loss of rhythm and literary excellence ; still, I can bear witness to this, that the Revised Version throws for me a flood of light on many places of Scripture which used to be a constant puzzle when I read them in the Authorized Version ; and I may say without fear that the message of God to man has greatly gained in clearness for the unlearned by the labour lately expended on it.'

As we read Mr. Owen's version, we feel we can say the same in many points. Every translation of a work full of thought, however defective it may be, gives some fresh light ; points are brought out hitherto neglected or unseen ; we refresh our old acquaintance with some message dear to us from childhood. It is like looking at a jewel in many lights : fresh brightness flashes out from every facet. For we are far too apt to run on well-worn grooves of Scripture, unconsciously giving to a translation the authority of the original, and resenting any interference with the beautiful and rhythmical English with which we have been familiar from our childhood.

This unconscious reverence for the language of the English Bible brings us into a great risk. From the vast mass of controversy and doctrinal discussion which has grown up around it, and the warm interest taken by the people in religious literature, we find that we

tend to read into the terms and phrases of Scripture meanings and inferences due entirely to modern controversy and the heats of past or present strife. Hence it is that a subtle tendency to error pervades our Scripture-reading, and we understand not what the writer meant to convey, but what we have ourselves poured, like a colouring matter, into the clear crystal of his inspired thought. Here, as elsewhere, 'each man sees with his own eyes'—eyes trained in endless prepossessions, and too often in bloodshot passion. What wonder and pity there must be in those pure souls which from their Master's side look down on our poor efforts to interpret or embroider the messages they delivered to us in the days of their life here below !

The translation here before us is an attempt to give in the English tongue a nearer approach to the true sense of St. Peter's words ; it aims at cleansing the mind of theological prejudices, and at showing the letter as it was understood by those 'dwellers of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia,' to whom it was first addressed. Centuries of Christian effort have successfully obscured the simplicity of Christ's Gospel ; we have fought over the plainest precepts, have turned fact into metaphor, metaphor into fact ; have used the technical terms of Jewish ceremony to enforce our views as to modern observances, or to colour the plain story of our Lord's life and death for us ; we have mistaken illustration for the thing illustrated, and worshipped the shadow rather than the substance. And so, when anyone courageously sets aside conventional formulæ, and, avoiding terms laden with controversial senses and the sulphurous smoke of Christian combat, tries in all sincerity to look at a primeval document as it was when first penned, he seems to us to be a bold and perhaps even an irreverent person.

If, however, we know anything of the force of the Christian faith, and have any foresight into the prospects of that faith, we must welcome a voice like this, which comes from one of our youngest dependencies, and accept the fact that an English student planted there, amidst many drawbacks, has also some great advantages in the more bracing and independent atmosphere he breathes. Here, we may feel, lies the value of Mr. Owen's attempt : it is an honest effort to give a vigorous and unconventional rendering, sometimes rough and clumsy, of St. Peter's words. The Epistle is in itself singularly fresh and

characteristic, and carries with it many traces of the impulsive and warm-souled Apostle who wrote it. It is a letter full of evangelic hope : after his deep disappointments, his misreading the meaning of the good tidings in his Master's lifetime, his later preference for the Judaic rather than the Gentile development of Christianity, his dispute with St. Paul, his alternations of despair and confidence, we find him in the end full of a beautiful certainty and fearless foresight. It is a lesson to us to find that one in earlier, and, as we might have thought, in brighter days, so full of doubts and despondencies, should in his old age have come to be known specially as the Apostle of Hope. He gives this tone to his writings when, at the very outset, in the invocation at the opening of the letter, he declares that God has 'begotten us again unto a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'

On the Larger Hope, which our friend the commentator treats as the keynote of the work, the hope of a larger, not a lesser, inclusion of human souls within the blessed company of those saved by Jesus Christ, there will no doubt always be uncertainty and a difference of opinion. Christ Himself deigned no direct reply to the question of the Apostles, 'Lord, are there few that be saved ?' for He would not reveal the secrets of the world beyond the grave. On this matter there will ever be two distinct strains of opinion : the one jealous for God's honour, inclined to narrow the portals of salvation, and certain that here and here only is our probation and 'accepted time' ; the other dwelling more on the difficulties which beset the acceptance of the Gospel, the grave limitations in time and space of the message of salvation, the faithlessness of preachers, the decay of institutions, the 'salt that has lost its savour.' The former class will regard any idea of an after-hope with horror, fearful of any weakening of present responsibilities ; the other class will rest on a conviction of the potency of the love of God in Christ, and a zealous desire to prove that the great salvation wrought for us has not failed. These latter feel that God displays Himself to the world rather as the loving Father than as the inexorable Judge, and that the Gospel is intended for all who do not hardly and purposely reject it ; that it is a message of inclusion rather than exclusion ; that God intends (to use Bishop Butler's phraseology) the future world to redress the awful inequalities of this, by offering salvation to all those

who here could not be said to have really heard the sweet sound of Gospel bells calling them to worship in the fold of Christ.

This feeling has its most extreme expression in that vast subterranean system of after-death probation, wherein the whole Church, and, in particular, the kinsfolk and friends of the dead, can come to the rescue of poor souls lying drenched in purgatorial fires. In spite of the many and manifest evils arising in dark times out of this effort to satisfy the longings of the human soul, the poetic, imaginative under-world has still held a place in the hearts of crowds, and in some vague way consoles those who mourn the parting from those dearest and sweetest to them. To them the Communion of Saints wins fresh power and beauty from the hope that the bond between the living and the dead is still unbroken. A dim yearning for just dealing, a sweet yet awful imagining of the dark world, a projection of shadowy hopes on a mirror which wears the semblance of reality—these are the things which give force to the thought that the deathbed farewell is not the last word, and that the survivor, with a touching altruism, can dedicate himself to the welfare of the departed brother.

Between these two opinions lies the view taken as to the Larger Hope in this work before us. It meets our yearnings, and has an answer to the jibes and flauntings with which Christianity is so often attacked ; it seems to remove something of the dire inequality of lots ; it bids us no longer think that God inflicts unmeasured woe on those who had never a chance of knowing Him or of hearing the sound of the Gospel ; it enlarges our sense of the might of Christ's salvation, and heightens the dignity of the message sent forth by Him. At the same time it relieves our poor humanity from the inequalities which beset our spiritual opportunities, and from dependence on the accidents of our surroundings ; we cease to be victims to the faithlessness of ministers of religion, or to the crush of daily work, which, weed-like, chokes the Word. In a word, it offers to the anxious soul the hope that in the end the love of God, and the far-reaching effects of the sacrifice of the Redeemer, will really be offered to every man for his acceptance, so that neglect or denial will still be entirely in our own power, and our responsibility to choose or to refuse will remain unimpaired. The probation of this present life will have predisposed us to accept or reject ; and the careless or the scoffing spirit will still rule the

acts of those who here choose the worst part ; nor would the brutal in heart be softened by any miracle, or the gross liver and the tyrant at once turn out unselfish and humane, and grasp without an effort such great salvation. For those who have here had a good chance, have lived in the light of the truth, have professed Christ without desiring to know Him, who, in a word, have had their fair probation here—there are no sure grounds of hope when the time of their active life is past ; the souls that have chosen evil rather than good are not likely to find that their momentous choice, with all its awful consequences, can be cancelled by a word, without an effort. That is not the way in which God's mercy, which is also His justice, works in the world.

I have tried thus to give some account of what is the main aim of this interesting effort to set St. Peter's message clearly before modern folk ; we may also treat it as a message of hope to us in the old country from brethren far away across the globe. The 'spirits in prison,' 'sometime disobedient,' who refused to hear when that earlier and typical deliverance by the ark was offered them by Noah, were, St. Peter tells us, privileged to hear, long ages after, the message of salvation from our Saviour's lips ; the fact is a declaration of hope for after-ages. It shows that in the structure and conditions of the world beyond the grave there is nothing to bar the love and mercy of God from being laid before those whose life below has not been one of defiance to Divine and natural law. And this great goodness of the Lord is also conditioned, for its operation on us, by the retention of man's inherent responsibility and privilege of free choice. It is always possible for a man to 'neglect so great salvation' ; it would be folly at least equal to that of those who vaguely rely on a 'death-bed repentance' were we to delude ourselves with the comfortable belief that our life here is of no importance in the matter, that our neglected opportunities are not recorded against us, and wilful godlessness is no bar to our future happiness. God's goodness to us is conditioned by His strict and Divine justice ; the selfishness and self-indulgence of to-day indisposes us for the higher life whenever offered to us.

Let me, in conclusion, commend this work on the Larger Hope to all who love the Scriptures and long to find the truth which shines therein. In this translation and notes they must not hope to find the

beauty of spiritual feeling shown in Archbishop Leighton's well-known commentary ; they will miss much of the old English rhythm and melody of that Book of books which has formed the taste and style of the best of our literary masters, as well as has touched the hearts of myriads of simple readers : they will find, instead, a genuine and often successful attempt to make clearer to man the deep counsels of God, and to forward the day when Christ's Gospel shall be the comfort and consolation of the teeming millions of our fellow-countrymen who are swiftly filling the waste places of the earth, and need to have set before them, in all the beauty of its heavenly countenance, the loving and saving message of the Risen Lord.

ERRATA.

Page 12, line 10, read 'Vinet,' not 'Vinst.'

„ 46, line 8, read 'to' after 'natural.'

„ 58, line 1, insert after 'evil' the words 'for evil.'

„ 62, line 14, omit '' after 'grace?'

„ 62, last line, insert 'before 'His.'

„ 63, last line but one, insert before 1 'Chap. iii.


„ 66, first line, omit 'of' at end of line.

„ 86, first line, 'l' slipped out of last word.

„ 104, line 29, insert 'John' after second 'St.'

„ 109, line 23, omit semi-colon after 'confirming,' and
substitute quotation mark.

PREFACE.

 HIS book aims at being a rational commentary on an important letter of a Christian Apostle to the Church of CHRIST, and it forms a system of ethics founded on hope.

The work in it is the outcome of some patient study and much anxious thought.

As to the form which the commentary assumes, the compiler has endeavoured to combine research with some originality of treatment, and greater plainness of utterance than is usually found in works of this class. In the left-hand margin will be found fresh and carefully collected illustrations of the statements or expressions of the text. Next to this is an original rendering from the Greek Version. In the right-hand margin a brief running analysis is given. Under the translation is a somewhat fuller account of the argument of the letter ; while underneath this again come the notes on separate sections, verses and words. In compiling these latter the writer has freely used the aids which have come in his way, sometimes with, sometimes without acknowledgment.

The new rendering is not offered—it needs hardly to be said—in any spirit of rivalry to older translations, but in the sincere hope that by the reproduction of the spirit of the thoughts of the original in fresh clothing the reader's mind may be attracted to the underlying sense of St. Peter's universal teachings : which sense the arbitrary theological meanings imported into many words of the Authorized Version have all but buried out of the comprehension of the mass of those who use the English tongue—

to the exclusion of a living, human interest in the matter generally ; to, in many instances, the fostering of sectarian bigotry ; and, too often, to the rejection and impatient denial of precious truths, which otherwise, and more faithfully interpreted, would be gladly and readily recognized as such.

The only reason for the book's publication is a desire to be helpful to that class of intelligent readers in the Bible who hold that it is where the truths of revelation are gradually becoming to be seen as truths of reason that Scripture is really and properly revered, as a written record of the Living Word of the Living Father, as the priceless legacy left by large-hearted benefactors of the race, who, moved by the Divine Spirit of GOD—man's Saviour—laboured to bring forth from the treasures of the Supreme Intelligence “ things new and old.”

ADELAIDE, 1888.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

What is to be understood by 1 St. Peter iii. 18-19, and does the passage give any justification for calling this Epistle "The Letter of the Larger Hope"?

LET us clearly express the issue raised. The question is not *how* CHRIST was made alive or quickened, but what this Scripture affirms Him to have done when He was so made alive. We, who "hold the Larger Hope," believe that as He while living in the body of this flesh saved men by "showing to them the Father," so, after being delivered from the body of this flesh, He continued the work of salvation; and we see in the verses in question an account of the first specific act of our Blessed Lord in His Risen Life, illustrative of His acts in that life, until now—until all sin and death, which is the consequence of sin, are destroyed.

What, then, do we mean by the Larger Hope? We mean that the saved constitute the large majority of mankind, and, consequently, that opportunities of salvation are not confined to this life; for, obviously, if they be, the large majority is lost.

Advocates of the salvation of the many are said to be in a position of considerable advantage on account of the gross materialism of those supposed orthodox teachers who delight to depict the tortures of the lost, and to dilate upon the severity and endlessness of their punishments. We who profess, and are glad to profess, ourselves advocates of the Larger Hope (as defined above) fail to see the peculiar advantage. We fully admit that truth cannot be promoted by selecting extravagant caricatures, as if they represented the views of the moderate and thoughtful men of the so-called orthodox school. It is not the caricatures we attack. The extravagances of any system are but the legitimate outcomes of that system—all error lies concealed

in the principles which give them birth. Hence it is the principles of these moderate and thoughtful men which we attack. Let us first hear what they have to say: "They are constrained to believe that the Scriptures teach that the doom is unalterable of those who reject CHRIST, and die in their sins." Now, what does this mean? Surely two things, not one. First: That all who reject CHRIST are lost. This is undoubtedly GOD'S truth on the recorded warrant of Him Who said: No man cometh unto the Father but by ME; on the deeper warrant of the voice of conscience—GOD'S Holy Spirit speaking in man's human spirit (the organ of the GOD-consciousness of man made in His image), which tells us all that there is neither peace nor safety for any man till he rests in GOD. But, secondly, there is tacked on to this first true assertion another, namely, that unalterable doom belongs to all "who die in their sins." If these words mean those who die *spiritually*, in the sense of ultimately rejecting CHRIST as well in the world to come as in the world that now is, then (if indeed such a state of things be possible, for it really means—a meaning we cannot evade if we honestly face it—that in certain cases GOD is powerless to overcome man's evil, and therefore that, as regards such cases, CHRIST'S finished work is in vain) we must, on the above stated grounds, accept this also. But if the words "those who die in their sins" mean, as we suppose the moderate and thoughtful men to mean, and as so-called "orthodoxy" is generally considered, and desires to be considered, to mean, those who without previous conscious profession of CHRIST depart this life when physical death occurs, when a man's soul and spirit leave the body of flesh in which they have dwelt here on earth—then we hold the view to be false and heretical, in that it runs counter to the general tenor of Scripture (however isolated texts may seem to support it); in that it is contrary to the belief of the Catholic Church; and in that it is most deeply opposed to conscience in GOD'S sight; for that cannot be justice, either in the divine or human estimate of justice, which punishes finite offences—however deep—with infinite punishment. We totally deny the title "orthodox" to such opinion. Orthodoxy means a right estimate of things on which to base the conduct of life. Such a delusive estimate—matured by constant use into a settled conviction, hovering like some incessant blackness over

the lands where this is the general belief—as the one which characterizes the attitude of these moderate and thoughtful men towards this branch of eschatology, namely, that those who depart this life in their sins are lost beyond hope of recovery, is a false estimate which can only serve to throw the whole conduct of life into miserable confusion. And it is on this (in our judgment) groundless estimate, and on those who profess it that we charge the gross material caricatures of popular teachers like Jonathan Edwards and his modern successors, who have but honestly followed out this false teaching to its logical conclusion—a conclusion which the so-called orthodox have never dared authoritatively to denounce and reject, however in private they may deplore it, because they have felt that they could not do so without denying their own cherished conviction of the impossibility of any repentance beyond the grave. It is no vain “slaying the slain” to attack this conviction, for it lives, and is daily and hourly working the mischief all false convictions must work.* We can see

*MR. SPURGEON ON DISSENTING THEOLOGY.—“We want a revival of old-fashioned doctrine. Our fear is that, if modern thought proceeds much further, the fashion of our religion will be as much Mahometan as Christian; in fact, it will be more like infidelity than either. A converted Jew, staying in London, went into a dissenting chapel which I could mention, and when he reached the friend with whom he was staying, he enquired what the religion of the place could be, for he had heard nothing of what he had received as the Christian faith. The doctrines which are distinctive of the New Testament may not be actually denied in set terms, but they are spirited away: the phrases are used, but a new sense is attached to them. Certain moderns talk much of CHRIST, and yet reject Christianity. Under cover of extolling the Teacher, they reject His teaching for theories more in accord with the spirit of the age. At first, Calvinism was too harsh, then evangelical doctrines became too antiquated, and now the Scriptures themselves must bow to man's alteration and improvement. There is plenty of preaching in the present day in which no mention is made of the depravity of human nature, the work of the Holy Ghost, the blood of atonement, or the punishment of sin. The Deity of CHRIST is not so often assailed, but the gospel which He gave us through His own teaching and that of the apostles is questioned, criticised, and set aside. One of the great missionary societies actually informs us, by one of its writers, that it does not send out missionaries to save the heathen from the wrath to come, but to prepare them “for the higher realm which awaits them beyond the river of death.” I confess I have better hopes for the future of the heathen than for the state of those who thus write concerning them. The heathen will derive but small advantage from the gospel which such triflers with the Scriptures are likely to carry them. I know not a single doctrine which is not at this hour studiously undermined by those who ought to be its defenders; there is not a truth that is precious to the soul which is not now denied by those whose profession it is to proclaim it. The times are out of joint, and many are hoping to make them more and more so. To me it is clear that we need a revival of old-fashioned gospel preaching like that of Whitefield and Wesley; to me, preferably that of

no difference in kind, though we may in degree, between those who hold such a conviction and those who dilate on the necessary horrors which attend it. Indeed, we think that if it be true it ought to be dilated on, in season and out of season, to a world the millions of which are, if this be really the case, daily and hourly going to utter perdition. Nothing can justify the man who holds it from so dilating with all the force of his energy. If it is false it ought to be rejected. That it is false, and has so darkened the CHRIST-taught truth of the Universal Fatherhood of GOD as to represent Him as the enemy rather than the friend of man, we hold; and as, consistently with what we believe, we wish to aid in ridding the world of such evil-tidings, to the good of man and the glory of GOD, we attack this falsity at its root.

The supporters of this view declare that they consider it a Scriptural question, and demand that it shall be settled *exclusively* by enlightened and adequate explanation of GOD'S written word. The holder of Catholic Hope in "the living GOD, Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe," has nothing to fear from the fiercest Biblical light which can be brought to bear on the subject. Any adequate and enlightened explanation of Scripture must throw light on it; has, indeed, in our judgment, already done so in the Creed of the Catholic Church—the simplest and best explanation of Scripture—from which men choosing to fall away have made to themselves these terrible darkenings of "the Truth as it is in JESUS." This we cannot doubt, because the spirit of the written word must agree with fact as it is, because the written word is "a lantern unto our feet"—sent to us, and preserved for us, by GOD'S providence to illustrate His Truth, and to explain His dealings with the race. But we decline to say that this question of the Larger Hope, or any other question, is to be settled exclusively by reference to the written word, and still less by any private judgment as to the meaning of that

Whitefield." [N.B.—It was of Whitefield that Wesley said: "Your GOD is my devil." And quite recently (1887) Mr. Spurgeon has withdrawn himself from the Baptist Union, because he considers that it refuses his demand for a revival of 'old-fashioned' doctrine.] "We need to believe: the Scriptures must be made the infallible foundation of all teaching; the ruin, redemption, and regeneration of mankind must be set forth in unmistakable terms, and that right speedily, or faith will be more rare than gold of Ophir."—From the "*Sword and Trowel*" for October 1885.

written word. Such an allowance would be simply to set up an infallible book in the place of an infallible church on earth. From the latter idolatry the great reformers of the 16th century strove to deliver the race, and would have done so more effectually had not their tendency been towards an infallible-book idolatry into which their descendants have so largely fallen. "The written word is but the bride, the spirit of GOD is the bridegroom;" the written word is but a *means* of grace, the real help of it is GOD'S Truth in it; and the GOD-consciousness of man is the court to which appeals of men as to the meaning of the Bible must be brought for settlement, because that is the court in which the Holy Spirit sits as Judge; and the consensus of such decisions forms the real body of the Catholic Faith, and is developed, modified and reconstructed, from age to age, by the Spirit of GOD pronouncing His judgments in the spirits of faithful men.

We hold that the Larger Hope is not a new light, but rather the regaining of a light which men have lost sight of (though it has never been wholly hidden) by breaking from "the faith once delivered to the saints." They have been so busy protesting against what they considered—sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly—error, that they have forgotten truths, which they might have known. They have forgotten that it is only given to the Catholic to be really Protestant; and so have become, in too many instances, protestors for, rather than protestors against, error. But even supposing the Larger Hope to be a new light—and, indeed, it has been so hidden away from men ever since Tertullian and Augustine threw the darkening shadow of their narrow intellectual hardness over Christendom; so overlaid and thrust aside that we of this 19th century may fairly regard it as a new light—in the sense, at least, of being new to the generality of mankind. Still that is nothing against its truth. It would be nothing against its truth had it never been heard of till a few years ago, or till to-day. If men believe in GOD as revealed in His works, of which the Bible is one, they must believe that "He has more light to break out from those works" than they have as yet got at, and Butler, long ago, noticed how "truths in revelation like discoveries in science may have to wait for ages till the discoverer arises." We do not know all about the scheme of salvation yet—and it would seem

that we have darkened much we might have known—let dogmatic finality affirm what it pleases. This is one of the great forces of resistance to the teaching of the Larger Hope—the old leaven of Scribes and Pharisees who have fossilized spiritual truths in fixed forms. They finally settled that form of doctrine which has resulted in the popular dogma that “there is no repentance beyond the grave,” and, naturally enough, they object to their system being called in question. But, as of old, we trust they will find that GOD’S light is not bound by their little systems; we hold that “even now,” as Vinst so impressively warns us, “after eighteen centuries of Christianity we may be involved in some tremendous error of which the Christianity of the future will make us ashamed;” that, in a word, while the underlying principles must ever remain the same, seeing these are truths of GOD, Who is Truth, the doctrines in which these principles clothe themselves vary, by GOD’S purpose, with the ages, which are also His. Facts are stubborn things. Here is one. In 1522 Magellan rounds the earth; in 1530 the Augsburg Confession was drawn up: that is to say, Protestant dogmatic finality, falling readily back into the very root-error whence its framers had struggled for deliverance, knows all things in heaven and earth, just about the same time that the Spirit of GOD (for otherwise it must have been the spirit of the devil; and on that hypothesis, what becomes of the moral government of this world?) was sending men out to make discoveries which should revolutionize man’s ideas about GOD and about His dealings with the race.

As a witness to GOD and of Him, the Catholic accepts, reveres and studies as a priceless blessing, the written word; but as a substitute for Him—never. This is, of course, a digression; but it is a digression forced upon us by the statement that our opponents regard the question of the Larger Hope, and the bearing of St. Peter’s words upon it, as purely and simply a Scriptural question, and require it to be settled *exclusively* by Scripture. We, on our part, are led to believe in this Larger Hope, and indeed all Catholic Truth, not because we find them in the Bible, but because they are felt to be true on their own proper grounds of evidence, as seen in the light of conscience in GOD’S sight—as “spiritual facts discerned by spiritual men.” Take that away, and the very foundation which supports

man's faith in the Bible is gone. Too long has that worn-out fallacy that made the Bible its own witness obtained, and thus, as a recent writer has well pointed out, "set at nought one of the first laws of evidence, to which the Word of the Father Himself submitted: 'If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.'" (St. John v. 31.)*

To the Bible, then, we gladly go, and believe we shall find in it, and eminently so, though by no means exclusively, in the passage from St. Peter's letter, a great deal of light in support of the Larger Hope—which believes that GOD purposes the salvation of the vast majority, and that what He purposes man's faithlessness will not hinder, and that consequently the dogma that there "is no repentance beyond the grave," which would obviously defeat that purpose, is false. It is impossible that the Bible if it contains GOD'S word can, as a whole, be contrary to GOD'S truth—and it is written in the consciousness of all *believers* that "GOD has not appointed men to wrath, but to obtain salvation through JESUS CHRIST our Lord," and in the consciousness of *all men*, that GOD is true.

We do not ground our belief in the Larger Hope—which we no longer "faintly trust" but firmly hold—on the passage from St. Peter's letter, but on the largeness of the Love of GOD. We find that passage, in common with many others, scattered up and down the whole Bible—dim and faint in the Old Testament, but growing ever brighter and wider in the words of our Lord and His apostles—in accord with what the illuminated conscience of man in GOD'S sight believes of the width, and depth, and height of the Love GOD has for man, as shown forth in CHRIST; and we believe that, as men continue to look for it, more and more light will yet "break out" of GOD'S written word on this most vital subject.

However, let us now confine ourselves to the passage in question, and consider some of the conscientious objections raised to our interpretation. It is not correct to say that only in this particular passage of the first epistle of St. Peter (supposing the so-called second epistle to be his—which is open to doubt) are there any intimations of

* It is curious and instructive how the Pharisees took up this saying, and tried to turn it against our Lord, and how He refutes their attempts by the assertion of His Unity with the Father (St. John viii. 13 sqq.).

support of the teaching of the Larger Hope. We think that to the careful reader there are others, and as such we have, in the course of the notes, pointed them out. Of course, the eye only sees what it brings with it the power of seeing. It is futile for any man to say that because he does not see these points they are not there; and it is uncharitable to allege that they who do see them—who honestly believe they see them—have foisted such points in to bolster up their interpretation of an isolated passage.

Verses 18-19 of chapter iii., with the verses that follow, are incidentally brought in by the apostolic writer to encourage those who are suffering persecution for well-doing. The very fact that they are so incidentally brought in is a strong presumption that the truth of CHRIST having carried His saving mission, subsequently to His death, into the unseen world was held—in the natural sense of the words—by the early Christian Church; in other words, that their creed, as well as the creed of the true Church of this nineteenth century, contained the clause: "He descended into Hades." St. Peter here refers to it as something those to whom he wrote well knew and believed, and, therefore, as requiring no proof at his hands. The apostle has been showing that it is the sign of a higher moral state to suffer as an innocent man than as a guilty one; for so did our Lord suffer, that Just One who gave His Life on behalf of us unjust ones, that we might have access to that GOD Who desires our coming to Him. So strongly, the apostle goes on to show, did CHRIST'S human will enter into the Will of the Father that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth, that though injustice could kill His human body, it had no power over His human spirit, and that as regards that highest part of His humanity He was made alive, and in the strength of His quickened human spirit went and announced the good tidings—the same good tidings of possible salvation which He had announced on earth—to certain representative spirits undergoing deserved retributive and corrective punishment in prison. This is what we believe the verses to mean, this is what we believe any fair system of interpretation shows them to mean; and if it is so they certainly do throw a great light on the subject of the Larger Hope. If this is what they mean then the Authorized Version (the version generally appealed to by English-speaking Christians) could only aim

at giving—in so far as it was a faithful version—this meaning; and the Revised Version, certainly, by the alterations it has made, seeks to emphasize this meaning. But the opponents of the doctrine of the Larger Hope say the passage does not mean what we say it does, but something different; that while the Authorized Version supports their meaning, the alterations introduced by the revisers weaken it—for they go against the current interpretation and serve to dissipate the bad news that there is no repentance beyond the grave—and that these alterations are undemanded by scholarship, and are introduced (perhaps unconsciously) by the revisers' idea of the doctrine involved. This charge, however, proves too much; for if the Authorized Version does, as they say, support their meaning (though we are far from allowing this), then as we know well the Calvinistic and Genevan tendencies which were at work in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century, what can our opponents advance if we turn to them and reply: "Ah well, be it so; we allow the Authorized Version rendering to support your meaning, but we deny it to be a correct rendering, and we affirm that the translators of 1611 were (perhaps unconsciously) led by their doctrinal bias to render these verses as they have done; and, therefore, we turn to the more correct revised rendering." And, indeed, herein is the secret of the little favour the Revision, as a whole, has found in the religious world. It upsets so many settled conclusions of sectarian bigotry and final dogmatism. It tends largely to the restoration of Catholic Truth. As we hold that GOD'S providence watches over His written Word as well as His Church, it would be, indeed, strange if it was not so. But because it is thus many men will have nothing to do with it. They talk about loss of rhythm, puerile changes, the learned trifles of pedants, the trouble it causes, the unsettling of faith—of anything and everything under the sun but that which constitutes the real gist of the matter. Now we are far from thinking the revision as good as it might be made, still less perfect; but we hold that for English-speaking people of the present day it is, as far as it goes, a great gain. The real question as to the merit or demerit of any new translation of the Bible is just this: What do men who are searching for the truths of Scripture want? Is it merely a modernized form of the old readings and old renderings, though manifestly shown by criticism

to be incorrect, *which serve to uphold the current forms of doctrine*; or is it readings and renderings, whether new or old, expressed in modern language, which are simply given because correct—or as correct as critical industry can at present render them—*perfectly regardless whether the old formal doctrines are supported by them or upset by them?* There can be but one answer from truthful and light-seeking men—and we believe that, were it not too often marred by a timid conservatism, the revision, as far as it goes, is a real help to such men, and one which must shortly lead to far wider and healthier results.

Let us, however, compare the renderings:—

A.V. 1611.

18. For CHRIST also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to GOD, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

R.V. 1881.

18. Because CHRIST also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to GOD; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison,

The first alteration objected to, by some, is a change in punctuation which puts a semicolon after GOD in verse 18. On what ground the revisers made this change is hard to say. We regret the change as it tends in some measure to confuse the sense, and to unnecessarily isolate a participial sentence which is certainly connected with the grammatical subject of the verb "might bring." No one, in his senses, doubts what is the grammatical construction of the sentence. It is "that He, being put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit, might bring us to God"—and the only reason why the participial adjuncts of the nominative are placed after the verb instead of near the subject, with which they agree, seems to be on account of the sequence of thought which follows, "in the spirit, in which also," etc. We attach little significance to this use of a semicolon however, and are quite willing to discard it; the more so as we find the Authorized Version itself violating the rule which this supposition of the isolating power of the semicolon raises by using it after the words "spirits in prison" in its translation, and so cutting off the description of those "spirits" from words which explain who those spirits were - -while in the Revised Version a comma is properly used. The truth

is, on this point, that as the most ancient MSS. are invariably written without any punctuation whatever, or even separation of words, no weight—no authoritative literary weight, that is—can be attached to any system of punctuation as such. But it is objected by some that the alteration of the Authorized Version's comma, in our particular passage, to the revisers' semicolon does favour, and is made with the object of favouring, the Larger Hope view of the passage. We quite fail to see how this is, and are more than content to do without it. The Larger Hope theory in connection with these verses, it is said, is that CHRIST'S human *soul* (so our opponents say, apparently ignoring, or being unconscious of, any difference between *soul* and *spirit*) was quickened for the work of preaching in His disembodied state to those in Hades who, up to that time, had been disobedient and unsaved. The semicolon is asserted to lend colour to this interpretation, the comma does not. How this lends colour we are quite unable to perceive. But—the semicolon difficulty apart—the statement of our Larger Hope theory in connection with these verses is, as stated by our opponents, incorrect. We say that the verses, taken with what follows, show us *how* CHRIST did employ His quickened human *spirit*—not that it was quickened expressly to do this. We hold that at His Incarnation our Blessed Lord “emptied Himself” of His equality with GOD, and was born on earth “in the likeness of men,” body soul, and spirit; we hold Him so to have lived as all men should have lived, and hence to be the Ideal Man, the “way” of men; we hold that His human spirit was ever controlled by the Holy Spirit, and hence is described as “a spirit of holiness” (Rom. i. 4), that His human soul was, in turn, controlled by His human spirit, and His body controlled by both. But His body was human flesh subject to physical infirmity, and in the region of that He was actually put to death, committing his human spirit (or GOD-consciousness) and so His soul (or self-consciousness) into His Father's Hands. After His burial—at what interval we know not save that He said to the penitent robber: “*To-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise, in the place of departed spirits”—His human spirit was made alive, and, ere He appeared on earth, He visited (ah, blessed visitation!) in His human spirit and human soul certain spirits (who apart from their souls could have had no distinct personality, as we

are told they did have), to whom He preached the glad tidings. On the third day, as He had foretold, He appeared on earth in His Glorified Spiritual Body—Which was no longer subjected to the limitations of that body of flesh which He had quitted. At intervals He showed Himself, but only to believers on Him, during the forty succeeding days; in the same state He ascended to the Father, carrying redeemed and glorified humanity with Him, and “there He ever liveth to make intercession for us.” So, we believe, “He brings us”—the human race—“to God.” It is not by one act of His Life on earth, but by the perfect work, the sum of the Incarnate Life; by His human birth in our likeness, by His whole human life lived for us, by His human death died for us, by the going of His humanity into the place of departed human spirits, by His Risen Humanity seen on earth after His death, by the ascent of His Humanity into Heaven—it is by this entire FINISHED WORK, which His Father had given Him to do, that the Man CHRIST JESUS, the Only-Begotten of the Father of the spirits of all flesh, brings humanity to God. Such is what these verses teach and involve to us who hold the Larger Hope. With such a view, in one particular of it, agrees the article of the Creed of Catholic Christianity—the article which sets forth the fact that “He descended into Hades.”

It should be carefully noticed that St. Peter uses exactly the same term (iii. 18, iii. 22) of the ‘going’ into Hades, and of the ‘going’ into Heaven. It follows, as far as the verbal argument goes, that if the latter be real (as all true Christians hold) so also is the former. It is a fact, the significance of which can hardly escape the earnest thinker, that those sects which have for so long neglected any observance of the great Catholic Festivals (as for example of Easter Eve which the Church especially appoints to commemorate, and so keep fresh in men’s minds, the going of CHRIST into Hades) seem, as a rule, to have at best very shadowy and uncertain grasp on the high truths and spiritual realities which these Festivals exist to teach and preserve. Of these realities, as of other things, it may be said: If any man willeth to do His will he shall know of the teaching.

Let us call this teaching, in accordance with what we said above before the court of conscience in GOD’S Sight. Does it not fully accord with our highest conception of Him, Who came to seek and

save those who were lost, that He should in the moment of His victory over the wages of humanity's sin, be mindful of His purpose, and fly with healing in His wings to lost spirits in ward?

Those spirits to whom He preached His *glad* Tidings (the Greek verb used allows no other meaning), St. Peter tells us, were those who were, once upon a time, fighters against GOD when His long-suffering waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being built—that is to say, antediluvian sinners, existent, when CHRIST visited them, as to their souls and spirits, physically dead in the estimate of men alive on earth, of the same class as those mentioned in chapter iv. 5-6. The very reference to the Flood—that typical scene of terrible punishment with which Righteous GOD visits man's ungodliness—which St. Peter here brings forcibly to the front—shows a strong beating light on the reason for the descent into Hades. It was because—as the history of the Flood so terribly points out—so few on earth had been saved from perishing. So, at least, we of the Larger Hope believe. Of course it is open to any man to say of the statement we hold this passage to make that it is a phase of theology which has not gained a recognised footing. We know this can be said, and is said, with the intention of branding the idea as a dangerous novelty. Were it new, that, as we have shown, proves nothing against its possible truth. But it is no novelty; and therefore they who make the above charge that it is a piece of mere conjectural theology, make it at the expense of ignoring the plain meaning of St. Peter's words, at the expense of the rejection of the Catholic Creed, at the expense of denying the direct historical testimony of Church History which teaches that this belief can be shown to have obtained in all true Churches from Apostolic times downwards, and has only been rejected by certain sectarian bodies, and also at the expense of the fact that it has been the belief of the English branch of the Catholic Church, as expressed in its formularies and as expounded by its most recognized commentators, however, alas, neglected by too many of its teachers and attempted to be explained away by schismatic traitors within its pale.

But the revisers have not only altered punctuation but also renderings; and that in a way which scholarship does not demand. They have altered 'by' after the participle 'quicken'd' to 'in'—which,

say our critics, implies that as in the first case it was in His human flesh that CHRIST was put to death, so in this second case it was in His human spirit He was made alive. To emphasize this correct meaning is, we think, the very object of the change. For the change is a much nearer rendering—in the modern meaning of words—of the Apostle's thought—and the meaning our opponents deplore is, in our judgment, the meaning which the Authorized Version really bears, for they must not forget that 'by,' in the English of 300 years ago, had very often quite a different shade of meaning from the modern instrumental 'by.' The 'by' of the Authorized Version is doubtless the same 'by' which the translators of 1611 employed in rendering St. Paul's "I know nothing by myself," that is to say "as regards myself"—just as an Englishman in the midland counties will tell one to this day that he 'doesn't think much *by* the new keeper,' meaning that he has a poor opinion with regard to him. The revisers' 'in'—as showing the sphere in which both death and quickening took place—gives the sense of the original Greek more nearly to modern ears. In the original, however, there are no prepositions but simply dative cases, and without any articles. The datives are those known in the grammar of New Testament Greek as "datives of reference," expressing that in which an action or state exists—to which sphere the predicate is limited; as for example in 1 Cor. xiv. 20, 'not children *in* understanding,' 'children *in* malice' (A.V.) that is to say, *as regards* understanding and malice; Eph. ii. 3 (A.V., the *revisers* here inconsistently retaining the archaic 'by') 'children of wrath *by* nature,' that is *as regards* nature. So also in this very letter, chap. v. 9, "whom resist firm *in* the faith" (so rendered both by A.V. and R.V.) that is, *in respect to, as regards* faith.*

In the passage we are considering *one* dative certainly cannot be instrumental. We cannot say, "He was put to death *by* the flesh" in the sense that His flesh was the *instrument* of His death. That our critics themselves seem to allow. His flesh was that region of His nature, as *man*, in which death could and did work, with respect

* From these considerations we have adopted in our translation the periphrasis "with regard to" to bring out the force of these datives of reference here and elsewhere.

to which He was mortal. Now, by every sound principle of translation, we are honestly bound to translate two exactly similarly constructed and intimately connected—whether in relation or opposition—grammatical clauses according to parity of construction. Wherefore, as in the first clause we have (from the necessity of the case) rejected the instrumental dative and adopted the dative of reference (“put to death in flesh”) so in the second clause “but quickened in spirit” we must also reject the instrumental dative and cannot say He was made alive by His spirit. It was ‘in the region of,’ ‘as regards,’ His human spirit, that He was “made alive.” Doubtless the *instrument* was the Holy Spirit of GOD, the Giver-of-Life, CHRIST’S own Holy Spirit, *as He is GOD*. But unless the great doctrine of the *Kenōsis*—of our Blessed Lord’s *utter divestment* of Himself of His equality with the Father (Phil. ii. 6-7) be kept steadily in view the whole Incarnation becomes futile in respect of the purpose for which, we are taught, it took place—namely man’s salvation. Without this sublime ‘emptying,’ which sacrifices all to save to the uttermost, CHRIST is *not* perfect man, and consequently His victory over the world, and over death, is no presage of man’s possibility of victory. If CHRIST *as man* has not died, nor, *as man*, been raised again, our faith is void, we are yet wholly in our sins, in that fleshly region in which death works. It was in the region of human flesh He died, it was in the region of human spirit He was made alive. And it is in connection with their defective psychology that critics of the school which opposes the Larger Hope teachings make the assertion that ‘flesh’ is used in Scripture of that which belongs to the creature, while ‘spirit’ is only used of that which is the Source of Life. This statement is partly incorrect.* Flesh and spirit—both ultimately, of course, coming from the one creative energy of GOD—are both spoken of in Scripture as belonging to man; as a matter of fact both belong to the Man CHRIST JESUS, and both belong to every man—though in some cases spirit is so dormant as to *seem* not to exist. It appears also from the testimony of reliable

* From ignoring this arose the old Manichaean heresy of the inherent evilness of matter, and the new (or modern) heresy of the universality of matter—whereby, as one has said, victorious analysis is able to prove that a beef-steak and the Lord’s Prayer may be shown to be but different combinations of the same thing.

authorities (like Winer, Alford, Vaughan and others) that the word 'pneuma' without the article (as in this passage) or without some qualifying words, such as 'Holy,' 'of GOD,' and the like, is very rarely, if indeed ever, used in the Bible of the *Personal Holy Spirit*. Therefore we hold that the revisers are quite right, and that the Authorized Version is quite wrong, in printing 'spirit' in this latter clause with a small instead of a capital S—that is to say if the 1611 revisers—for such they too were—intended by using the capital letter to signify the Holy Spirit.

Our critics seem to work on the comparatively modern and defective dichotomist theory which supposes soul and spirit are but different names for the same part of man's nature, whereas all the better scholarship allows that true Scriptural psychology requires the recognition of man's tripartite nature.* We believe this will be found to be a key which will unlock many a profound mystery, and especially those connected with the study of "the last things." It is another old-new light which men have hidden away, but which better criticism, and deeper, and therefore more reverent, because less self-satisfied, Biblical study is restoring gradually to the Church. In the light of it we see that CHRIST as the Ideal Man is body, soul and spirit. He is so as He makes up the entire complex Second Person of the ever Blessed Trinity—the Son "Who brings humanity to GOD." In the entirety of this tripartite personality, as regards flesh which He took upon Himself at His Incarnation, He expired on the Cross, in the entirety of this personality as regards spirit He was made alive; the Holy Spirit, His Own Proper Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, of Which He had voluntarily "emptied" Himself when He became man, working in the region of His human Spirit by which He had (and so shows we too may have) union as man with GOD, making that human spirit of His again alive, that in turn giving life to His soul, and that in turn making alive His body—no longer a body of flesh, limited and sense-bound, as are ours here on earth, but the Spiritual Body in which He showed Himself alive after His Resurrec-

* The present writer thankfully and gladly acknowledges his deep obligations to a book called "The Tripartite Nature of Man" by the Rev. J. B. Heard, which will amply repay careful reading.

tion, in which He went to Heaven, in which He ever liveth—the body with which we too may be “clothed upon,” if we attain to the resurrection of the just.

What is asserted in iii. Peter 18-19 is not that the flesh died and that the spirit was made alive, but that the Son of the Father Who came from His Father to earth and Who, before His Birth in time, had existed on an equality with the Father, as GOD Who is Spirit, Who out of His great love for perishing men ‘emptied’ Himself of this glory to save them, at His death on earth ceased to live, in body, soul and spirit, mortal life as regards the flesh, was put to death as regards the flesh; began to live the Spiritual Resurrection Life, was made alive as regards spirit; and the further assertion follows that it was *in* His quickened human spirit, the region in which His New Life worked, that He went and preached to human spirits in prison that they too might live as regards their human spirit, in the manner determined by GOD. It follows that we must look upon “*in* which,” at the beginning of verse 19, as the only possible correct translation.

Such seems to us the meaning of this confessedly hard place in St. Peter’s letter. Where we err may our error meet with speedy exposure and correction. But seeing that such is the meaning the passage honestly conveys to us, we hail the rendering of the revision as being more likely by its nearer and correcter translation, to raise clearer ideas on the subject in the minds of modern English readers, and we claim the passage itself as throwing considerable light on the doctrine of the Larger Hope and as good Scriptural warrant and illumination for what we believe, in our conscience before GOD, to be of truth concerning His purpose as to the ultimate destiny of the race. Having thus endeavoured to remove the objections, which lie on the threshold of the treatment of the subject as it is handled in this commentary, we must now leave our little work to stand or fall on its own merits.

This letter was addressed to the Christian communities of Asia Minor by Peter, an Apostle of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, from Rome; and was written between the middle of the year 63 and July 64, A.D., when the great fire at Rome happened, and the Neronian persecution began.

THE LETTER OF THE LARGER HOPE.



Chapter i. 1-2.

1. Matt. xvi. 17, 18	1.	¹ PETER, an ² envoy of JESUS CHRIST,	Introduction (1-2).
2. 1 Thess. 1-4		to the elected ³ dwellers among a people	
3. John vii. 35	2.	not their own, of the ⁴ dispersion, in	
4. Deut. iv. 37		Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia	
5. Acts xv. 17, 18		and Bythinia— ⁵ elected according to	
6. 2 Thess. ii. 13		the fore-knowledge of GOD the	
7. { Exod. xxiv. 7, 8		Father, in the progressive holiness	
{ Eph. i. 4		wrought by the ⁶ SPIRIT, unto obedi-	
{ Heb. ix. 18, 19		ence and sprinkling of the blood of	
{ Heb. xii. 24		JESUS ⁷ CHRIST: Real free help to	
{ 1 John 1-7		you and peace be ⁸ multiplied.	
8. { Dan. iv. 1			
{ Dan. vi. 25			

Argument of Letter (chapter i. 1, 2):
Saint Peter, as an accredited messenger of JESUS CHRIST, sending greeting to those called by GOD, through the Holy Spirit, in CHRIST'S strength, to journey from earth to heaven, points them to the supernatural elements, both in cause and effect, of Christianity; for these issue from the operation of the Blessed Trinity, and

COMMENTARY.

Chapter i. 1.

Verse 1. *An envoy.* One sent to bear the message of his sender—a term applied to our Blessed Lord Himself (Heb. iii. 2, and compare Acts iii. 26, John viii. 18, 42). Mark that St. Peter speaks of himself as *an* envoy, claiming none of that false pre-eminence arrogated to themselves by those who say they are his successors, the bishops of Rome.

To the elected. They to whom the message is sent. In all questions relating to 'election' let us never forget Who He is Who 'elects' or 'chooses out.' He is none other than GOD, Whose Name is LOVE. Of Him Old Testament prophecy declares—and that in the very midst of its direst denunciations of man's evil—that He asks: Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? (Ezek. xviii. 23). Of Him St. Paul writes to Timothy: GOD, our Saviour, Who willeth ('thelei,' i.e. 'purposes'—for what GOD wills He intends assuredly to bring about) that ALL men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim. ii. 4). Of Him the writer of the Second Epistle of Peter—be he who he may—declares that "He is long suffering to you-ward not wishing (a poor rendering this, the Greek '*boulomenos*' meaning 'having in aim,' 'forming a deliberate counsel') that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9). Remembering this, we see how early in this letter our Apostle strikes the key-note of the Glad Tidings of "the living Hope" of which he has to tell, and we shall be also freed from that detestable and blasphemous human conception of an election of Divine caprice, which has so lamentably hidden away the true idea of the love of God towards man from the minds of so many. Again, it makes this letter 'general' or 'Catholic' (in the real sense of that much-abused word), and opens out the force of the expression 'elected dwellers among a people not their own'—for it thus includes everyone whom GOD'S purposes of salvation—ultimate settlement in bliss—embrace; first-fruits, full harvest, aftermath, all alike in their order: which is to say, all men.

Chapter i. 1-2.

Dwellers among a people not their own, of the dispersion. All those 'scattered and yet picked-out seeds' (Amos ix. 9), Jew and Gentile alike, who were either then aware, or thereafter to become aware, that man's true citizenship is in heaven. In employing the term 'the dispersion' (see marginal reference) St. Peter uses, of course, what would be well understood, in its technical sense, by those to whom he had a special mission. There is no necessity for us, however, to confine the term to its literal signification; and to do so weakens the whole letter.

In Pontus, etc. The order of the names does not (on our hypothesis that this letter was written from Rome) regard geographical situation; but the mention of these provinces points to the important fact that there must have been much successful missionary enterprise in Apostolic days of which the book of Acts and the Epistles give little and, in some cases, no record.

2. *Elected.* We have repeated this word from verse 1, considering it to apply to the spiritual dispersion. It has been suggested that this second verse describes the writer himself and his office, rather than those to whom he wrote. This may be, but it makes no material difference; for if the verse describes his case it consequently also describes, in the case of all others, the way in which the process of the Divine Call works. This is, first—

According to the fore-knowledge of GOD, the Father. GOD'S 'fore-knowledge' represents, from one of its aspects, His 'determinate counsel' (Acts iii. 23); all His decrees being founded upon His Omniscience—that is to say, the presence of all things to Him. This explains why we employ 'fore-decreed' in our translation of the twentieth verse of this chapter. The 'elected'—i.e. those called out to salvation, though not yet assured of it (Phil. ii. 12-13)—become what they become (1 Cor. xv. 10) through the real love-springing help of our Father in heaven, Whose Omniscience 'fore-knew' our disobedience, and Whose Love 'fore-decreed' in consequence His means for our restoration (Jer. xxix. 11: the words "to give you hope in your latter end")

Chapter i. 2.

is a valuable O.T. witness to "the Larger Hope"). GOD, the Father, is, in the fullest sense, Man's Author. The process is continued

In the progressive holiness wrought by the Spirit, wherein comes that going on 'from strength to strength,' that sanctification, by which the purpose of the fore-knowledge of GOD, Who is Love, is worked patiently out in the region of the awakened human spirit. GOD, the Holy Ghost, is man's Sanctifier, with an object, namely :—

Unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of JESUS CHRIST.

Which is just this—man's restoration to oneness with his GOD. The awakened spirit, by submission of the will, obeys the call (cf. Acts ix. 6) and at once enters into a beginning of that true freedom of obedience which consists in *doing what one ought*, perfectly shown forth by the example of the Man CHRIST JESUS and therefore possible to man, when in union with His risen and ascended Lord; and the *whole* nature of man—body, soul and spirit—further finds itself in a state of justification in GOD'S sight—encompassed by the Divine forgiveness and sharing in the acceptance wrought by the sacrifice on the Cross, on which Altar Love paid, once for all, the ransom for the sins of the whole universe. GOD, the Son, then, in the past-present-future, evermore (Heb. xiii. 8) is man's Redeemer.

Obedience and sprinkling. These words (the latter only found in N.T., besides here, in Heb. xii. 24) are well illustrated by the narrative in Exodus xxiv, especially by verses 7-8.

Real free help to you, etc. Grace is that real free help—that spiritual reality—sent by GOD to assist men in needful ways (Ps. xli. 1). It cannot be bought. It is of free gift, and the undeserving fall away from it. It flows through well-defined channels—the sacraments being especially the *means* of grace; but it is not confined to these channels. Spiritually, as temporally, 'God helps those who help themselves.' Our Apostle desires for his readers, first this free real help, and then the peace which is the fruit of it. And in desiring that these

Chapter i. 2-9.

blessings may be 'multiplied' he intimates that the obedient elected already enjoy the first-fruits of the Spirit, and need their increased continuance. Heaven begins on earth.

	1st Part of the Letter (i. 3—ii. 10).	
1. { John iii. 5 Titus iii. 5 James i. 18	3. Praised be GOD, Who is also the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, for having, according to the profusion of His mercy, begotten us anew unto hope which lives through the rising of JESUS CHRIST from those who were dead—unto inheritance incorruptible, inviolable, imperishable, preserved in heaven for you who, in the might of GOD are being guarded, through the agency of faith, unto Salvation—which is ready to be disclosed by uttermost time.	Praise to God for our new birth to the hope of the inheritance; glorious in substance, purity, and beauty.
2. Rev. i. 18		
3. Heb. ix. 15		
4. { Prov. xviii. 10 Isa. xxvi. 3		
5. Rom. viii. 19		
6. 1 Pet. iii. 17		
7. 2 Cor. vi. 10		
	6. At which exult, though now for a little while, if so need be, having been grieved by various trials, in order that the proving of your faith—your faith, by much more costly than gold which perishes, and yet is tested by fire—might be found to result in your praise and honour and glory at the disclosing of JESUS CHRIST; Whom having not seen you love, in yearning towards Whom, though now beholding Him not, yet believing, you exult with a joy that cannot be expressed—a joy crowned with glory—carrying off the object of your faith, the salvation of souls.	To which Inheritance, on retrospect of what we were and on prospect of what we shall be (for Hope is the condition of Christian life) we are to rejoice, despite present trials; they being the proof of that faith which has as object the salvation of souls.
8. Wisdom iii. 6		
9. Prov. xxvii. 21		
10. { 1 Cor. iv. 5 Rom. ii. 4-11		
11. { John viii. 56 John xx. 29		
	9. you exult with a joy that cannot be expressed—a joy crowned with glory—carrying off the object of your faith, the salvation of souls.	(3-9.)

Chapter i. 3-9.

<p>(Chap. i. 3-9) they result in a penetration beyond things temporal into fadeless glory. The trials of the pilgrimage—lest we should be broken down by over much sorrow—are cheered by the vision of GOD, and moreover these trials, in themselves, serve as a cleansing and preparing instrument by which we apprehend these things, and the end of faith is not self-regarding but transmissive—leading to the ultimate settlement of lives in that bliss which arises from deliverance from sin.</p>

3. *Praised.* The Greek word here used (eulogêtos) is that employed in the N.T. of the praise given by man to GOD for His Blessings. *According to the profusion of His mercy.* The mercy of GOD, the Creator, is over all His works—hence it is the source of that ‘grace’ or real help, which is given to man in redemption, justification, and sanctification.

Begotten us anew. The original cause of our Regeneration is the merciful Will of GOD, the agency by which this Will is carried out is the Incarnation, culminating in the Birth, Life, Sacrifice on the Cross, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of JESUS; man hears of this Will in the Glad Tidings, which are therefore spoken of as “GOD’S power unto Salvation” (Rom. i. 16), and he apprehends it, makes it his own, by

Hope, which lives, a living Hope, a life in which Hope is the energizing principle; for this Christian Hope “has life in itself”—gives life, and looks for life as its object (John xiv. 19). The expressions ‘living’ and ‘Hope’ are characteristic of St. Peter’s style. The word ‘hope’ does not occur in the synoptic gospels. It is a Christian, Spirit-taught, virtue, derived from the Resurrection, and is used in contradistinction to the spiritually dead state of “having no hope and (being) without GOD in the

Chapter i. 3-5.

world" (Eph. ii. 12). In classical writers 'elpis' means simply 'expectation.'

Through the rising of Jesus, etc. The Christian lives by hope, "the just by his faith shall live." Hope, however, becomes merely a groundless illusion unless good has conquered evil in the outposts, and shall eventually have the perfect victory—in other words, unless CHRIST has risen from the dead and shall cause the dead to rise. This is the hope by which "we were saved" (Rom. viii. 24). St. Peter (who in 'begotten anew' uses a Greek term peculiar to himself) does not here dwell on Baptism, the outer instrument or sign of Regeneration, but goes back to that which makes Baptism and Faith and Hope alike effectual—the victory of CHRIST; herein enforcing the same truth as St. Paul does in Rom. vi. 3-4. See, also, notes on iii. 21.

Into inheritance, etc. Before these words we must supply 'for having begotten us anew' in order to bring out the truth that though all men are children of the Great Father it is only those who are regenerate, born anew and from above, who become aware of the privilege of sonship, and consciously enter into the relationship through CHRIST, the Life (Gal. iii. 27).

4. *Incorruptible, etc.* Redundancy of epithets, each bringing out some side of the fulness of the spiritual reality treated of, is a characteristic of St. Peter's style.

Reserved in heaven. The Christian is not to look for perfect bliss till heaven is reached. On the pilgrimage he can enjoy foretastes, privileges indeed, but not full possession "until the term appointed of the Father" (Gal. iv. 1).

5. *Are being guarded.* This guard is twofold in aspect. From the Divine side it is 'the might of GOD,' Who, as the Efficient and Supreme Source of preservation, Alone makes us dwell in safety; from the human side—for as man can do nothing apart from GOD, so GOD can do nothing for us, without the consent of our will—it is the firm holding of the Shield of Faith, in which we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of evil. "Man's faith lays hold upon GOD'S might, and GOD'S might strengthens man's faith, and so we are 'guarded.'"

Chapter i. 5-8.

Through the agency of faith. Mark the warning. These words exclude those who shall ultimately be found (if, indeed, any so insensate shall be found) to have refused either to have come into, or to keep within, the stronghold of GOD.

Ready to be disclosed, etc. There is nothing here to indicate that St. Peter thought the end of the world imminent. The readiness is in the preparedness of salvation, purposed in the unchanging counsel of GOD.

6. *If so need be.* Suffering, in St. Peter's view as also in St. Paul's, is no matter of chance; but is part of the plan by which GOD works out the perfection of His creatures. The disciple is not above his master, and He "though He were a Son, yet learnt He obedience (*i.e.* entered fully into the will of GOD) by the things which He suffered" (Heb. v. 8). "Human life is essentially suffering" moans Schopenhauer and his school. CHRIST and the Apostles say the same thing, and *point out the remedy*: man is called to lead the spiritual life, and so far as he succeeds conquers human suffering: which, after all, in man and nature, is suffering "in hope" (Rom. viii. 21).

7. *Gold which perishes.* The inference is as follows: If gold which perishes as a possession to its possessor (*cf.* Acts viii. 20), and like meat (John vi. 27) by its consumption, need testing by fire, how much more does your faith, which is being proved and fitted for age-long use and has an attainable end—namely the salvation of souls (verse 9)—need the salting with fire?

Your praise, and glory, and honour. Praise is the approbation of GOD; honour, good repute in the Church Catholic; glory, both one and the other; and is the Christian's true portion—the glory which was his from the beginning of the world and is reserved in heaven for him, if he come forth from the trials (Luther's "Anfechtungen" of verse 6) of life approved.

8. *Having not seen.* Some MSS. read 'having not known,' *i.e.* in the flesh, as man with man. So that the words amount to the same thing. The object of either reading is to show that man's love for CHRIST does not depend on outer personal acquaintance (John xx. 29, compare 2 Cor. v. 16)—and yet can reach a depth

Chapter i. 8-12.

too deep for full utterance, and a height, like the face of Stephen, all golden with the glory of heaven.

9. *Carrying off, etc.* 'Reportantes' in the Vulgate. Clement of Alexandria beautifully says of ripe Christians: "Their souls, not yet arriving unto the absolute good, dwell, as it were, in the vestibules of their Father's palace, near the Great High Priest"—and so enjoy, in measure, as earnest of in fulness hereafter (compare verse 4, above), the prize to which Christian hope points, the SALVATION OF SOULS—the placing of lives in bliss. It is most important to notice there is no 'your' in the original. Personal salvation is merged in general salvation; to be wrapt up in the former would involve loss of the latter—as that deep utterance of our Lord warns us: He that loveth his soul shall lose it (John xii. 25). The soul is the life, as being the central personality of the man—the meeting point of two opposite natures—the fleshly and the spiritual.

1. Dan. ix. 25-27	10. Concerning which salvation forth-tellers	Now salvation—the ultimate setting in bliss of GOD'S people is the theme of all revelation; foretold of old; preached now; watched by the holy angels from on high. (10-12.).
2. Rom. viii. 9	who foretold about that real help from	
3. { Isa. liii. Ps. xxii. 2 Cor. i. 5	11. GOD, which has you in aim, sought and traced out, tracing towards what ¹ and what kind of a season the Spirit ² of CHRIST within them was making clear, bearing testimony beforehand, as it did, to the sufferings appointed for CHRIST and to the glories consequent on those sufferings.	
4. Heb. xi. 13, 39-40	12. And to those men it was disclosed that not ⁴ for their own benefit but for yours were they labouring in these matters, which now have been announced ⁵ through the agency of those who brought the glad tidings to you by the Ho'y Spirit sent out from heaven, matters even into which angels long to bend their attention.	
5. Matt. xiii. 17		

Chapter i. 10-12.

(Chap. i. 10-12). True faith is that which accords with <i>the spirit of the teachings of prophets and apostles</i> , one in substance, however various in mode of expression, and marked throughout by a continuity into the ultimate issue of which the angels long to see.

10. *Forth-tellers who fore-told, etc.* The object of such frequent citation of the Old Testament writers in the books of the New Testament is to show that the Glad Tidings of GOD about JESUS CHRIST are no novelty. It is undesirable, however possible from a certain standpoint, to *limit* the words of this tenth verse to the Old Testament prophets, including under that title all the tellers-forth of GOD'S Will under the Old Dispensation. The word 'prophet' primarily means a 'teller-forth,' and the man who performed this function of old among the chosen people in so 'telling-forth' GOD'S Will to their own generation, moved thereto by the leading of the Divine Spirit, were, in many cases unconsciously, 'fore-telling' (*i.e.* opening out the plan of salvation) the real free help from GOD which is manifested in the Man CHRIST JESUS. So they became 'seers.' And as good must of necessity war with evil, suffer in the fight, and yet, in the firm belief of the faithful, ultimately get the victory—their testimony fore-told the "sufferings appointed for CHRIST, and the glories consequent on those sufferings." But the end is not yet. As long as evil remains, our LORD CHRIST, as He did, once for all, in Person, individually, here on earth, suffer, during His Human Life, contradiction, opposition, defamation, rejection, and death, still suffers representatively in His Church (it is to this St. Paul seems to refer when he speaks of "bearing about in the body the deadness, or putting to death (*nekrōsis*) of Jesus," 2 Cor. iv. 10); and the consequent glories of the Kingdom of Heaven remain incomplete. Otherwise the daily prayer: "May Thy Kingdom come" has no sense. Still the plan of

Chapter i. 10.

God's free real help—grace—of salvation is evermore at work : and the forth-tellers of GOD'S Will under the present dispensation, like those under the old, only amid more favourable conditions—are, in so far as they are faithful to Divine Truth, as apart from partial conceptions of that Truth formulated by sectarian systems—by their careful watch over the present opening up the future, and they have been doing so ever since the 'prophets' of the Apostolic Church until now. Ostervald's version of this passage brings this clearly out : "*C'est ce salut qui a été l'objet de l'exacte recherche et de la profonde méditation des prophètes, qui ont prophétisé touchant la grâce qui vous était destinée.*" We seem to see in this view of the continuity of the prophetic office that development of truth which our Blessed Lord describes as under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit—the Spirit Who comforts and exhorts alike—"When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth" (John xvi. 13.), working on "the mystery revealed unto the apostles and prophets" (Eph. iii. 5). For, as Bishop Butler says in *The Analogy* :—"To say that the Scriptures, and the things contained in them, can have no farther meaning than those persons had who first recited or wrote them, is evidently saying that those persons were the original, proper, and sole authors of those books—that is, that they are not (in any sense) inspired" (Part ii. chap. 7). The continuity of the plan of salvation is, by God's Purpose, slowly opened out in the ages, and this progress is fatal to all sectarian humanly-extracted systems of dogmatic finality. We do not—as is so often assumed—know all about the plan of salvation yet. We know enough it is true, and far more than the best of us do. But we do not know all, nor do those spiritual beings who are nearer GOD than we, for it is into the *ultimate* issues of the salvation of humanity, centred in the soul of man, that angels desire to look. With its earlier stages they were well acquainted ; they sang for joy at man's creation, they saw his fall, they were constant witnesses of Christ's Redemptive Work. Thus there is a vast unity and design in the work of mercy and love ; GOD being the agent ; man, the

Chapter i. 10-12.

object; angels, the witnesses; prophets, apostles, evangelists, the ministry of the Catholic Church, and each faithful member of the Same—one and all energized by the Spirit of CHRIST—the unfolders.

11. *Tracing towards what, etc.* The study of the pious few of old used to exercise itself as to the date and signs of the Incarnation of CHRIST; human curiosity, now-a-days, too often wastes time and talents in fruitless search for the date and signs of His *visible* Second Advent. As if in its spiritual sense that Advent were not ever-more; as if the Kingdom of GOD were not (as CHRIST declares it to be) among us; as if, as regards the realized sense the solemn assurance of our Lord that it is not for man “to know the times and seasons” of it were unworthy of credence—as if faith’s attitude were not rather expectant preparedness than curious calculation!

The Spirit of CHRIST. Compare “the Spirit of Glory and that of GOD” in chapter iv. 14. This is the Holy Spirit of GOD (Gen. i. 2)—the Spirit of the Father (St. John xvi. 15) and of the Son (Gal. iv. 6). In this statement we have the assertion of the pre-existence and GOD-head of CHRIST, and also the statement that, as of old, so now GOD works by the same Spirit to prepare man for His various manifestations of Himself. Athanasius—a true Catholic, whose hardest conflicts were with the Church itself; who resisted the Church of his day in the interest of a higher truth which it had not yet learnt, or had allowed to slip into the background—points out that the Holy Spirit bears a very special relation to the Son.

Sufferings appointed, etc. Those individual sufferings of our Lord which were offensive to Peter at first (compare St. Matt. xvi. 22-23 and Acts iii. 18), and also those continuing and mystical sufferings of the Church’s Head with its members.

12. *To those men it was disclosed, etc.* The Syriac version has “to them it was revealed because they sought it not for themselves.” The words of our text mean: (1) that the true prophets “had not carried out their ministering work for themselves, bounded as by local and personal interests, but with a view to the

Chapter i. 12.

interests of even the most distant members of the great family of GOD" (Plumptre); (2) as Peter's own teaching shows (Acts ii. 17-31—iii. 18-24) that the prophets looked for the matters disclosed to them, in answer to their searching out the Will for present guidance, to find fulfilment in the last days of their dispensation, whensoever those days might come. Balaam, the son of light without love, struck the true note:—

"I shall see Him, but not now;
I shall behold Him, but not nigh."

Those who brought, etc. Here we have recognition by our Apostle of the fact that those who, like St. Paul, had taught in Asia quite another *side* of the truth to that which he himself especially inculcated all the same taught the Glad Tidings. While the continuity of the prophetic work obtained (and still obtains) throughout, in *outer form*, the labours of the Old Dispensation are to that of the New, as cause to effect: for

the prophets the ministry	} speak	{	by Spirit of	} of	{	sufferings appointed for
			CHRIST			CHRIST and consequent
			in them,			glories;
			by Spirit			real help from GOD, which
			sent from			has man in aim (v. 20).
			heaven			

Into which angels long, etc. Mystically symbolized by the figures who overshadowed the Ark of the Tabernacle—"to the Mercy seat-ward were the faces of the cherubim" (Exod. xxxvii. 9). If we desire to know the reason for the intense anxiety of angels on this subject, the following hints may assist us:—Salvation was not apparently designed for angels (though the statement in Col. i. 20 certainly extends the efficacy of CHRIST'S Redemptive Work into the regions beyond earth); at any rate it was not brought about by CHRIST taking their nature but ours (Heb. ii. 16); and further, in GOD'S Providence, it is by the Church that the manifold wisdom of GOD is made known to them (Eph. iii. 20).

Chapter i. 13-17.

1. Luke xii. 35	13.	Wherefore, gird up your mental loins, ¹	Consequent exhortation to understand and act upon principles of watchful endurance and obedient reverence, with a view to the attainment of holiness of life. (13-17.)
2. 1 Pet. i. 7		continuing temperate, put your hope	
3. 1 Pet. i. 2	14.	fully in the real help which is being	
4. Acts iii. 17		brought to you in the disclosing	
5. { Acts x. 31 James ii. 1-4 Rom. ii. 11		of JESUS CHRIST, as children ²	
	15.	thoroughly obedient, conforming your- ³ selves, not to those desires formerly	
		existent in your ignorance, but rather, ⁴	
		after the pattern of the Holy One	
		Who called you, become also your-	
		selves holy in every form of conduct.	
	16.	For this reason it is written: Ye shall	
		be holy, because I am HOLY. And	
		if you call upon as 'Father' Him ⁵	
	17.	Who adjudges impartially according	
		to the work of each separate person,	
		conduct yourselves during your	
		dwelling in a strange land with	
		reverential awe, knowing	
<hr/>			
		(Chap. i. 13-17.) Hope is the bride of	
		Faith, and, when true to herself,	
		delightedly trusts in the promises	
		made to her in the Glad Tidings,	
		which are Faith's archives. The	
		offspring of Faith and Hope is that	
		Obedience which consists in renounce-	
		ment of evil and pursuit of good, and	
		of necessity proves its divine lineage	
		by holiness of life;	

13. *Your mental loins.* 'Dianoia': the thinking faculty, the soul as the living intellectual principle of our nature. The Christians who are to be made acquainted with the scope of revelation must

Chapter i. 13-17.

actively put themselves in the way of learning (St. Luke viii. 18), and brace up their intellectual powers to understand (1 Cor. xiv. 15) the free real help which *is being brought* (for grace is a present blessing) to them through the disclosing of JESUS CHRIST, with the view of realizing it in their lives (Matt. vii. 21) by practical holiness—for “the end of life is action; not a thought, tho’ it be the noblest.”

14. *Children thoroughly obedient.* Literally ‘children of obedience,’ according to the well-known orientalism which “treats intimate connection, derivation, and dependence, even in spiritual matters, as the relation of a child or a son” (Winer’s Grammar of N.T. Greek). Children of obedience are those who belong to obedience as a child to its mother—to whom obedience has become a ruling disposition. If this explanation were—as it seems it should be—applied to that oft-misinterpreted proof text ‘children of wrath’ (usually taken to mean children of *GOD’S* wrath, Eph. ii. 3), and men came to see that what St. Paul says is that they are as regards nature children of a wicked and passionate impulse, from which their Heavenly Father’s pity designs and wills their deliverance, what a terribly immoral darkening of the loving Fatherhood of *GOD* would be removed! This verse throws incidental light on the date of the letter; it is addressed to converts, not their descendants.
15. *Form of conduct.* ‘Anastrophe’: outward course of life (*not the same word* as is used in Phil. iii. 20: there the Greek term is equivalent to ‘citizenship’). Conversation, from the Latin ‘*conversari*,’ to move about with others, used to mean conduct generally. It has, in the deep-meaning irony of history, dwindled down to mean merely ‘talk.’
16. ‘*Father.*’ A most probable reference to the use of the Lord’s prayer.
17. *Who adjudges.* Not merely in the future, but also now by a present and continuous judgment of man’s work.
With reverential awe. “This fear is not cowardice; it doth not debase but elevates the mind; for it drowns all lower fears, and begets true fortitude and courage to encounter all dangers for

Chapter i. 17-24.

the sake of a good conscience and the obeying of GOD. 'The righteous is as bold as a lion' (Prov. xxviii. 2)."—*Archbishop Leighton*.

1. John i. 29	18.	that not with things corruptible, as,	<p>This holiness of life has, by the redemption effected by CHRIST, been made possible to man: who can now love GOD and his brother, seeing he is born again by the Word Who endures throughout the ages.</p> <p>(18-25.)</p>
2. Acts ii. 17		for example, with silver or gold, were	
3. { James iv. 8 1 John iii. 3	19.	you ransomed from the insensate conduct of life which your fathers handed	
4. John xvii. 17		down to you, but with costly blood as	
5. John i. 12, 13		¹ of a lamb blemishless and stainless, even with the costly blood of	
6. { Isa. xl. 6-8 James i. 10, 11	20.	CHRIST: Who was fore-decreed indeed before the foundation of the universe, but shown openly at the end	
	21.	² of the times for your sakes, who through His means are faithful towards GOD, Who having raised CHRIST from those who were dead also gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope should have GOD for	
	22.	³ their object. Seeing that you have morally cleansed your souls by your	
		⁴ obedience to the truth [through the Spirit] unto unfeigned brotherly love, from cleansed hearts love one another	
	23.	intensely, having been begotten anew, not out of corruptible seed but in-	
		⁵ corruptible, through the living and enduring Word of GOD.	
	24.	Because:—	
		⁶ All flesh is as grass	
		and the glory of man as the flower of grass;	
		the grass has withered	

Chapter i. 18-25.

7. { John vi. 63 Matt. xxiv. 35	25.	<p>and the flower is falling away ; but the uttered Word of Jehovah endures unto the ages. And, moreover, this is the uttered word which was told as good news to you.</p>
		<p>(Chapter i. 18-25)—manifested in the fullest exercise of love to God and love to man—worthy of the spiritual origin it claims, and of the unchang- ing Word of the ages, by which its life is nourished.</p>

18. *Were you ransomed.* This verse expresses the especial object of the Redemption—man's deliverance from sin. This is in exact accordance with the angel-declaration of the mission of JESUS (St. Matt. i. 21). Our Blessed Lord took man's nature—body, soul, and spirit, into His Person at the Incarnation, and it was therefore that nature which He surrendered to GOD by His Sacrifice of Himself: and indeed it is only by becoming at one with his Maker that man can cease to sin. This 'at-one-ment' JESUS, GOD made man, renders possible.

Insensate conduct. Just as holiness is the true wisdom, sin is the true folly. That wicked ignorance, *which a man might avoid* ('holding down the truth in unrighteousness' Rom. i. 18) is no excuse for folly: conscience and scripture always insist on the necessity for knowledge (Eph. iv. 18. cf. Isa. v. 13). It was neglect of this truth which caused the 'insensate' conduct inculcated by Jewish tradition and heathen maxims alike (Rom. iii. 9); it is the neglect of the knowledge which might be had from due attendance on true Church teaching which is the cause of the 'insensate' conduct of the greater portion of the so-called Christians of this day, and which is the parent of the "honour-among-thieves" code of the purely worldly.

Chapter i. 19-21.

19. *A lamb blemishless, etc.* CHRIST, our true passover (1 Cor. v. 7) without blemish of sin in Himself, without spot or stain in the world, is here meant. Alford sees an allusion to the exodus in the deliverance from vain patrimonial traditions, and to the previous institution of the passover in 'fore-decreed' (verse 20), and so holds 'the lamb' here to be the Paschal Lamb—but that was meaningless save as outward and visible sign of the CHRIST Who was to be manifested.

20. *Fore-decreed indeed.* (See note on verse 2, above). No spiritual work of GOD falls under the categories of time or space. Man's Redemption was, is, no change or after-thought, but the accomplishment of a purpose pervading the ages. And all revelation—written and unwritten—is but the unfolding of this purpose: "for the testimony of JESUS is the Spirit of Prophecy." (Rev. xix. 10.)

At the end of the times. Commentators say that the idea is common to St. Peter with other Apostolic writers that the Incarnation began the last period of GOD'S dealings with man on earth. But may not this and similar expressions refer to GOD'S dealings with Israel as an earthly polity? In continuation of the paschal symbolism of the previous verse we must remember that the passover was slain at eventide (Exod. xii. 6).

21. *Gave Him glory.* GOD is here said to have raised JESUS from the dead, and in intimate connection with such raising from those who were dead to have given Him glory—doubtless the Divine glory of which He had, in His love for us, emptied Himself. But CHRIST taught that GOD'S glory from man consists in the copious fruit-bearing of those He sends (John xv. 8). So that from one side, at least, we have here a fore-note of the great teaching to come later on in this letter as to the Redemptive Work of CHRIST extended beyond the grave.

Have GOD for their object. A.V. 'in GOD' (literally 'into GOD'). This expresses far more than mere assent of mind as to the existence or veracity of GOD. It means an entrance into, and continuance in, that love which is shown by keeping His commandments. In ordinary parlance when we say we

Chapter i. 21-25.

'believe a person' we mean something different, and less, from saying we "believe in a person"—the latter signifying that not only do we regard his statements as true, but that we are willing to be guided by them.

22. *Have morally cleansed.* (V. 'castificantes.') In this spiritual sense the word is peculiar to St. Peter, to St. James and to St. John. It implies freedom, not only from sensual defilement but, from all enticements of self; the perfect freedom of an obedience which is rooted in love to GOD and man. Hence, perhaps, the Vulgate rendering in this place, "*obedientiā charitatis.*" (Cf. 1 Tim. i. 5.)
23. *Not out of, etc.* 'Out of,' origin whence (St. John i. 13); 'through,' not the begetting principle, but that by which the principle works.

Word of GOD. "It is obvious that the 'Word of God' is more here than any written book, more than any oral teaching of the gospel, however mighty that teaching might be in its effects . . . St. Peter's use of the term stands on the same level as that of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. iv. 12-13): The Word of GOD is living . . . to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." "The 'Word' (Logos) is nothing less than GOD, manifested in CHRIST, as speaking to the soul of man, a manifestation of which either the preached or written word may be (or may not be) the instrument, but which may work independently of both, and is not to be identified with either."—*Plumptre.*

25. *The uttered word.* Another attestation (as in verse 12 above) by St. Peter as to the integrity of the truth as it had been taught to his readers by the founders of their respective churches. Let us carefully note that it is the 'uttered' word which is here spoken of. The 'Word' (Logos, of verse 23) is the Personal Word of the Father, Who, 'in the days of His Flesh,' became man, CHRIST JESUS (St. John i. 14); while 'the uttered word' (rhēma) here and in the LXX. quotation from Isaiah, is the Will of GOD revealed and expressed: sometimes by the Word and His Spirit immediately, sometimes mediately through the mouths of His servants; see Acts x. 22—xi. 14.

Chapter ii. 1-5.

<p>1. 1 Pet. iii. 21 2. Eph. iv. 31 3. { 2 Cor. ii. 17 2 Cor. iv. 2 4. { Luke v. 39 R. Ps. xxxiv. 8 R. 5. { 1 Kings viii. 11 Matt. xvi. 18 1 Tim. iii. 15 6. Rom. xii. 1</p>	<p>C. ii. 1. Putting away, therefore, all evil intent, and all guile, and shams, and grudg- ings, and all slanders, as babes just born yearn after the rational milk, unadulterated, in order that on it you may grow unto salvation; if, that is, you have "tasted that GOD is good." And it is to Him you are coming, the Living Stone, discredited, indeed, by men, but in GOD'S sight chosen-out and held precious, and you, as living stones, let yourselves be built up a spiritual House for a holy priesthood to offer through JESUS CHRIST spiritual sacrifices right acceptable to GOD.</p>	<p>As products of this new-birth consistent followers must first crave sustenance proper for them, provided by the Author of their new-birth, and then incorporation into the spiritual priesthood of that Temple which the Divine Author has in view. (ii.1-5.)</p>
	<p>(Chap. ii. 1-5.) Having laid the foundation of the Divine Life for man, namely the Personal Holy Spirit effectually working on man's spirit, through the Incarnate Word,—and having built on this only foundation, faith, hope, charity, the three bases of all Christian action, the apostle goes on to general exhortation. As an indispensable initiatory act, in these new-born, he urges the laying-aside of all evil intent, and that earnest desire for nourishment of our spiritual life—the milk flowing from the Word to the soul or reason, apart from all human adulteration, which can hardly fail to</p>	

Chapter ii. 1-5.

be an object of intense desire to all such as have at all tasted of the Divine Goodness. And this to the end that we may grow more and more in the Spiritual Life. But growth must result in something, and, under a changed and two-fold figure, the apostle represents the outcome of our growth. We become at once the temple of living spirits built up upon a Living CHRIST, and that temple's holy priesthood offering up sacrifices right acceptable to GOD.

1. *Putting away, etc.* This refers to evil intents and purposes of the mind—to the inner life, not only to that merely outside ceremonial cleansing expressed by a kindred expression in the account of Baptism (iii. 22, cf. St. Matt. xxiii. 26). The evils are those common to humanity, and as such point to the universal intention of the Epistle. The connection of ideas is very remarkable, and nothing can well be more derogatory to the true nature of inspiration than to suppose that St. Peter chose general terms at random. The connection of ideas is that 'marking' of Scripture at which its real student always aims. 'Evil-intent' and 'guile,' then, are the inward disease, finding outer manifestation in 'shams,' and 'grudgings,' on the part of those shamming, of the peace of the good, which, at length, breaking into utterance, vent themselves in the aspersions of 'slander.'
2. *Rational milk, etc.* The rational ('vernünftigen'—*Luther*) milk is "as truth is in JESUS" (Eph. iv. 21), and is only then 'unadulterated' when received as He meant it to be received. It refers to the nourishment of the Christian mind or reason (cf. i. 13 and Rom. xii. 1, where we must read 'rational service'). They rob real religion of one of its chief component parts who depreciate

Chapter ii. 2-5.

the rational element in man's education in the Divine Life, and striving to become more spiritual than even their Master, Who, as man, "grew in wisdom," as we all have to do, sink into merest mysticism. "The Word of God must be desired for the sake of life, devoured by the hearing, ruminated by the understanding, digested by faith."—*Tertullian*. The command 'yearn after' points to that hungering and thirsting for the things which make for peace, which is as natural to the true child of GOD as the desire for food is to the infant at the breast.

3. *Good*. Speaks of the Source of the rational, unadulterated milk. It is the word which describes the mellowness of wine (references); and in its Greek form—chrêstos—is very similar to the Greek form of CHRIST (CHRISTOS), and there may well be, as so often in the Greek Testament, some significant play on the words, which for the English reader can hardly be produced. The 'Lord,' of the A.V. is certainly GOD, Jehovah; for the words are an adaptation of the familiar "O taste and see how gracious (chrêstos, LXX.) the Lord is."
4. *Are coming*. The daily habit of Christian life—lived in the daily real help (i. 13), 'the real help' referred to in iii. 7—not something done once for all, and needing no renewal.
5. *As living stones, etc.* "Vous aussi, comme de pierres vives, vous entrez dans la structure de l'édifice."—*Ostervald*. For the newborn babes (verse 2) are intended to grow into men—from soft ductile imitators (Eph. v. 2) to become strong Peters, "rock-men" of faith. Not that they become independent or self-sufficient, but ever deriving all their strength from the chief Corner-Stone, the great Rock in a weary land, CHRIST the Rock, whence, indeed, they are hewn (Isa. xlv. 8. 9). In classical writers (for example *Virgil*: *Æneidos*, lib. i. 167) living stones means rocks in their natural shape, and some such shade of meaning is, at least, permissible here. For Christianity does not destroy personality, nor reduce all men to one uniform, dead level of similarity. Impetuous Peter, stern James, loving John, deep-pondering Paul, all preserve their different characteristics while their glorious unity remains below the surface determining the

Chapter ii. 5.

course. And that unity comes from the Spirit of GOD within them. (1 Cor. xii. 4-11.)

For a holy priesthood. The best MSS. insert the preposition 'for' 'into,' (eis) before a 'holy priesthood.' Temple, priesthood, worshippers—all, are one. It is, at once, a return to the ideal of the true Israel of GOD, "ye shall be unto ME a kingdom of priests" (Exod. xix. 6), and a further development of that ideal. The settlement of the priestly functions upon the heir in patriarchal times, and in a separate priestly caste afterwards, were concessions (as CHRIST teaches of divorce) to men's hardness—partial veilings of truths which the then education of the race unfitted it to bear. The distinguishing features of the Christian priesthood are 'holiness' and 'power' (verse 9), and these verses tell out quite clearly that Christians are not to be isolated believers but to constitute a corporate unity, known as the Catholic Church—founded to draw man to man in brotherhood, and man to GOD as the All-Father—and collectively exercising the functions of the priesthood—in virtue of fidelity to the holiness and power which all may possess. This will be, we believe, fully realized in the Church Triumphant (Rev. i. 6, v. 10), the members of which being priests and kings require none to approach with them, or for them, to the Throne of GOD. But, for us, the Church Triumphant is not yet. Still there is hardness of heart. These fore-casts of glories, yet to be in their perfection, do not exclude the offices of a *representative* priesthood in the Church Militant here in earth—a priesthood which represents a spiritually-present CHRIST to the people, as distinct from a vicarious priesthood which stands in the stead of an absent CHRIST. They do not exclude such a true and necessary representative priesthood as St. Paul recognized (2 Cor. ii. 10, v. 20), and still less, of course, do they interfere with the functions of the one Great High-priest—from Whom, and from Whom alone, the true priests of the Catholic Church derive such power and holiness as they have. At the same time these words are fatal to all that false ecclesiasticism which endeavours to enforce the teaching that man was made for the Church,

Chapter ii. 5-9.

instead of the Church being (like the Sabbath of old) made for man.

To offer, etc. The sacrifice of this real priesthood is the continually renewed sacrifice of self—best symbolized for the Christian by the Sacrament which commemorates the Great Self-sacrifice of Him Who has made all other offerings of self possible. The offering finds expression in worship of all sorts; sacraments, prayer, praise, duty, work; and we have in the added words “through the agency of JESUS CHRIST,” an apostolic injunction to offer all such worship in CHRIST’S Name, founded on CHRIST’S own warrant (John xiv. 14), and on the truth He revealed that “apart from Him”—the Head, Whose Body is the Church—“man can do nothing” (John xv. 5).

1. Isa. xxviii. 16	6. Wherefore it is contained in Scripture :	Illustration of foregoing from the Old Testament, and the danger of rejection of this teaching contrasted with the office, privilege, and reach, of those who faithfully accept it.
2. { Acts iv. 11 Ps. cxviii. 22 Matt. xxii. 42	Behold I place in Zion a Corner-stone, Chosen and precious :	
3. Isa. viii. 14, 15	Whosoever leans steadfastly on Him	(6-10.)
4. Rom. xi. 11	Shall not be put to shame.	
5. { Acts i. 16 Exod. ix. 16	7. The preciousness belongs to you who	
6. { Isa. xliiii. 20 Deut. x. 15	so lean, but against the opposers :—	
7. Exod. xix. 6	The stone which the builders dis-credited	
8. { Isa. xliiii. 21 Mal. iii. 17 (margin) Titus ii. 14	has been made into the cap of the corner ;	
9. Isa. lx. 5	8. and	
	the stone to strike against, and the Rock of trapping.	
	For they are stumbling, being fighters	
	against that Word, unto which stum-ling they were also appointed. But	
	a race chosen out are you, a kingly	
	priesthood, a holy nation, a people for	
	preservation, so that you may publish	
	forth the excellencies of Him, Who	

Chapter ii. 6-10.

10. { Matt. xvii. 2 1 Tim. vi. 16		called you out of darkness into that 10 Light of His, which is 'wonderful,'
11. { Hos. i. 2-9 Rom. ix. 25.	10.	who were once no people but now the people of GOD, who were men un- 11 pitied but now have been pitied.

(Chap. ii. 6-10.) The Apostle cites the Old Testament in proof that such honour awaits the believer, but to the contumacious their rejection of the only foundation results in their own overthrow, leaving the Rock of CHRIST unshaken. To their resultant misery the disobedient are exposed, not by any act of GOD, but by their own perverse contumacy. As a counter-poise to the terrible state of the disobedient, the Apostle describes the high privileges of those called to lead the Divine Life, and proves the Christian to be under the influence of this calling by the fact that he has been brought out of the kingdom of darkness into GOD'S wondrous light, and urges, in consequence, that the Christian is bound, as such, by a consistent life of Light-bearing, to declare ever more to all men the wisdom and power of GOD'S love.

6. *Is contained, etc.* (Cf. for the Greek expression Acts viii. 32.) Quoted apparently from memory, and agreeing exactly with neither the Hebrew nor LXX. Versions, as so often occurs in the

Chapter ii. 6-8.

apostolic writings, and in the recorded utterances of our Lord Himself and His missioners. A proof, if only men were spiritual enough to receive it, of the utter absurdity of the verbal-inspiration theory of Scripture.

Shall not be put to shame, i.e. routed. In the passage of Isaiah (A.V.) it runs "shall not make haste," with which compare chap. iii. 6 of this letter against the unspirituality of a life of nervous scare, such as 'revivalism'—ancient and modern—tends especially to foster. "Who grasps Truth, guards peace: because he deeply trusts in Thee, O Lord, Thou life of the ages, O GOD great and age-long!"

7. *Oppugners.* Contumacious fighters against light. Those who wilfully refuse belief and obedience, and so are diseased rather than 'living' stones (see Lev. xiv. 40-44). Unbelief is the root of disobedience.

8. *The Rock of trapping.* "Set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel" (Luke ii. 34).

Unto which stumbling. "Let them alone," said Divine Love, "they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. xv. 13-14). If "fall into a pit" mean 'go to unending torment,' how could Divine Love—coming to save what is lost—say this? But if it means (as does not the growing consciousness and hope of all good men more and more recognise?)—go to that necessary and corrective punishment which shall take the obstinacy and conceit and blindness out of the spirits of the disobedient, and encourage the obedient to walk in light, then can we understand how the loving Heart of Jesus, Who was too tender and true to be indulgent, could have—nay must have—uttered these words. So, here, in the words of this verse of the Epistle, the contumacious are "appointed"—by no loveless, man-forged, 'decree of reprobation,' but by their own sinful folly to a *stumbling* which may serve as a means of cure, at any rate is intended so to serve—now, or hereafter, and not only to themselves, but also, in GOD'S wondrous education of the race, to others: see Rom. xi. 11, 12. Besides these considerations, and merely taking the words as they stand in their natural

Chapter ii. 8-9.

sense, no one, save he who is blinded by dogmatic prejudice, can possibly suppose that 'stumbling' and 'irretrievable falling' are synonymous terms.

9. Notice in this verse how the excellencies of Christians are the old excellencies of the ideal Israel, removed by the genius of Christianity from the letter to the spirit; just as the election of Christians (chap. i. 1 ref.) is the same election in which the Jew gloried.

A kingly-priesthood. By spiritual descent from a King and Priest. These offices are in the New Testament Church (when fully realised) to be united in each believer, as they already are in its great Head, Who in the Old Testament Church alone united them; save in the case of Melchisedek, CHRIST'S direct type.

A people for preservation. 'Peculiar' is used in the A.V., in this place, in its legal sense, as of something belonging to a person as a special possession—for example some English bishops hold 'peculiums' in alien sees. Used in this legal sense it is here undoubtedly wrong. The word occurs again in Titus ii. 14, where however it rightly represents a different Greek equivalent ('periousious'). Luther translates 'das Volk des Eigenthums'; Ostervald, 'le peuple acquis,' the Vulgate, 'populus acquisitionis'; Cranmer's Bible gives 'a people which are won'; and our revisers render 'a people for GOD'S own possession.' The Greek equivalent ('peripoiêsis') has, however, two distinct shades of meaning: (1) acquisition and (2) preservation; and it is this latter meaning, which includes, and, indeed, extends the former, which seems to be predominant in the N.T. use of the word. Especially is this the case in Heb. x. 39, where *preservation* of life is just exactly opposed in idea to its loss. So that, in our translation, the rendering 'a people for preservation' has been preferred—pointing as it does to the two-fold truth that Christians are both saved by CHRIST, and intended to be instrumental in the salvation of others—even as our Lord said to the Apostles He had taken in the gospel-net that they in turn should take men to keep them alive; in accordance, too, with the very object of 'preservation' in this verse, that they should thereby show forth

Chapter ii. 9-12.

the excellencies of GOD; in accordance again with the statement of chap. i. 9, in which the object of the Christian's faith is described as the 'salvation of souls.'

Light which is 'wonderful.' This Light (see refs.) is, perhaps, a reminiscence of the Transfiguration, and the term 'wonderful' ('thaumaston') is the exact word used by the psalmist of the rejected corner-stone (Ps. cxviii. 23, cf. Matt. xxi. 42).

10. Here again we have the gradual filling-out of the good news of hope (cf. i. 1, 21). The history of Gomer's children (used much as St. Paul uses it) is made a parable of the destiny of the human race; the offspring of an evil and adulterous generation are by the cleansing mercy of GOD, to become "the people." This verse is also a special proof passage as to what class St. Peter is addressing—namely, all men, Jew and Gentile alike.

1. { Chap. i. 1 { Heb. xi. 13 2. James iv. 1 3. John xviii. 30 4. { 1 Cor. iv. 9 { Heb. x. 33 5. { Luke xix. 44 { Wisdom iii. 13	2nd Part of the Letter (ii. 11—v. 12). 11. Beloved, I exhort you to keep back, as those away from home and among strangers, from fleshly desires inas- much as they war against the soul, keeping your conduct of life lovely among the nations, in order that in the very point wherein they slander you as 'evil-doers,' they may, on the ground of those lovely actions, being spectators of them, glorify GOD in a day of visitation.	Seeing then Chris- tians are brought into light, they, too, must be light- bearers to a dark and hostile world. Such light-bearing is to be shown by:— (11-12.)
	(Chapter ii. 11-12.) The Apostle now turns to exhortation, and, as a motive for holy living, reminds men that as citizens of heaven they must so move in a world, blinded by prejudice against the superiority of such citizen- ship, as to attract aliens.	

Chapter ii. 11-12.

11. Here begins the second part of the Letter—the first portion being mainly concerned with the statement of Christian privilege, this second with consequent responsibilities. St. Peter appeals to his readers as citizens of Heaven, and therefore strangers upon earth, as it is under the mere earth-spirit; and (as Dr. Plumptre points out) “puts forward the negative aspect of Christian life first, as being prior, both in order of thought, and often in that of time, to its more positive development.”

Fleshly desires. These are more than mere bodily appetites, and the expression conveys no sour condemnation of natural tastes. It means all those *evil* desires, and *inordinate* appetites, and morbid *perversions* of our nature, which are in their tendency destructive of the soul. True restraint (*i.e.* use apart from abuse) is the first step in the conflict. The ‘soul’ is the central principle of life, which is capable of *attaining* immortality, through union with GOD in CHRIST, by renewal of the spirit. Hence man must be born again. The popular idea of the inherent immortality of the soul seems to rest on very unstable grounds.

12. *Lovely.* The word ‘honest’ in its modern signification, is too hard a word to express the ‘allurement’ of the true Christian character here signified—its ‘sweetness and light.’

‘*Evil-doers.*’ This is probably a reminiscence of the event described in John xviii. 30. The word is peculiar (in the N.T.) to St. Peter, and to that passage. Sacred and profane history (*e.g.* Suetonius, at the very period of the appearance of this Epistle) show how Christianity was coming to be regarded by the then world. It was accused of being atheistical in religion, abominably impure in morality, and (the chief-count, this, in imperial eyes) as being, as regards politics, of revolutionary tendency. And, in this last respect, the wise children of this world were, as they so often are of things within their ken, mainly right. The avowed aim and the whole organization of Christianity is revolutionary. It seeks to make the kingdoms of this world the Kingdom of CHRIST. Hence the constant

Chapter ii. 12.

struggles between Church and World, Church and State.* But though its aim is thus revolutionary, its manner of working is, like its Master's, by spiritual warfare, not by physical force, still less by any fickle impetus of mob-popularity—and its estimate of 'revolution' is the very reverse of anarchy and licence. It aims at the true freedom of obedience—that condition of being in which every man, for the general good, does what he ought, and it ever holds in view a system of government—an ordinance of man deriving its authority from GOD—which shall be in reality, and not in mere nominal profession, Christian. Hence the apostolic inculcation which follows of obedience to constituted authority, and so the gradual leavening (which is still transpiring) of that authority to Christian principles, by the obedience which stoops to conquer for the common wealth. The history of the Christian era is the history of the chequered progress of this movement—a history of GOD'S wondrous patience and man's wondrous folly—in which the Church, by reason of the traitors within its gates, has, alas, too often played but a sorry part.

Being spectators. The Greek verb is unusual, occurring only here and in chap. iii. 2. It implies the searching, critical gaze of a hostile world (John xv. 19), concentrated on the Universal Society which forms a spectacle, a gazing-stock, to all created spirits.

Day of visitation. By whom? GOD, surely. When? When He shall visit the spirits of those now in opposition, or indifferent, as He had done in the case of the converts St. Peter is addressing. There is no direct reference here to the final period of Judgment. The reference is to the period of awakening, when God shall "make manifest the counsels of the heart" (1 Cor. iv. 5), and men shall, either in this life or in that beyond the grave, see things in their real bearing. The incident of the dream of Pilate's wife illustrates this, with which compare Wisdom xviii. 17-19. "Wenn es nun an den Tag kommen wird," so Luther renders this phrase. Such a time has ever been since the first day, and is now among us; in imperfection owing to

* It is remarkable how Cromwell, who had a deep sense of this, and who struggled to make England a Kingdom of GOD, spoilt his efforts by using force.

Chapter ii. 12-18.

our human frailty and guilty faithlessness, whence the majority have not known 'the time of their visitation.' But, in His Divine Perfection, still do 'GOD'S eyes behold the children of men,' and it is dawning more and more towards the perfect Day, when all except the resolutely defiant (if, indeed, any man's finite will can prove strong enough finally to resist Infinite GOD'S declared Purpose for his salvation) shall see clearly and, instead of being unalterably fixed in impenitence (as unchristian bigotry assumes), by true repentance—the more bitter and searching doubtless, the longer postponed—and by real amendment, only to be produced perhaps, in very many cases by the "age-long prunings" of a series of calamities—glorify the Same GOD, Who, by JESUS CHRIST, and through His Spirit, gave at the beginning to His physical creation that peace and order which were but types of the outcome of "His thoughts of peace" towards the creatures capable of reason and spiritual life whom He has formed. GOD'S intermediate human agents to bring about this desired end are good and true Christians, 'the salt of the world': an additional reason why they should lead 'lovely' lives.

1. Rom. xiii. 1	13.	Be subject, therefore, to every human ¹ institution, for the sake of the Lord, ² whether to the Emperor as superior,	(1) Due subjection to secular rule: as between ruler and ruled;
2. 1 Tim. ii. 2			
3. John viii. 32			
4. Acts iv. 19	14.	or to Prefects as to men sent through the imperial agency to bring about vindictive justice on evil doers, but the approval of those who do well;	(2) Due subjection as between master and servant
5. Prov. xxiv. 21			(enforced by the example of the Service of CHRIST);
	15.	because thus it is the will of GOD that who do well should ³ gag the wilful	(3) By due subjection to the domestic relations as of husband and wife
	16.	ignorance of senseless men. As free men, and not as having freedom for a veil to your evil intent, but as servants	(illustrated by the relation between Sarah and Abraham);
	17.	of God, honour all; love the brother- ⁴ hood, fear GOD, honour your Emperor. ⁵	(The relative duty of the husband)

Chapter ii. 18-25—iii. 1.

6. 1 Cor. viii. 10	18.	Servants, honour all, by being in sub-	And (4) finally by
7. Isa. liii. 9		jection, with all proper respect to	common forbear-
8. Isa. liii. 12		masters—not only to those who are	ance and love, as,
9. Rom. vi. 11		kind and fair but also to those who	indeed, the Old
10. Eccclus. xxviii. 17	19.	are cross-grained. For this is the	Testament had al-
11. Isa. liii. 6		state of grace, if, on account of con- ⁶	ready taught.
		sciousness of GOD, one bear up under	(ii. 13—iii. 12.
	20.	sorrow, suffering unjustly. For	
		what sort of renown is that if having	
		done wrong, and being, thereupon,	
		beaten, you shall endure it? But, if	
		doing well and thereupon suffering	
		you shall endure, this is the state of	
	21.	grace before GOD. For to this state	
		you were called; because CHRIST	
		also suffered for you, leaving behind	
		for you a pattern in order that you	
		might follow close upon His traces.	
	22.	For, “never did He sin, nor yet was	
	23.	deceit ever found in His mouth,” ⁷ and	
		when He was reviled, He reviled not	
		again; when He suffered upbraided not	
		—but committed “His Spirit” to Him,	
	24.	Who judges righteously; for He it is	
		“Who Himself offered up our sins,” ⁸ in	
		His own Body upon the tree, in order	
		that we having ceased to exist to	
		sins might live to right-doing: “by	
	25.	Whose bruises we were healed,” ¹⁰ For	
		going astray you were like sheep, but	
		have now turned back to the Shep- ¹¹	
Ch.		herd and Guardian of your souls. In	
iii.		like manner, do you wives honour all	
1.			

Chapter iii. 1-8.

12. 1 Cor. ix. 19-21
 13. 1 Pet. ii. 12
 14. Gen. xviii. 12
 15. { Rom. iv. 11.
 Gal. iii. 7
 16. Eph. v. 25-33
 17. 1 Cor. vii. 3 5
 18. Rom. xii. 16

- men by being subject to your own husbands, in order that if certain husbands oppugn the Word, they shall without word, be gained over by the conduct of their wives, when they are spectators of your pure conduct which is centred in proper respect.
2. Whose adorning let it be not that outward thing of braided hair, and encircling gold, or attiring raiment,
3. but the hidden humanity of the heart, existing in the incorruptibility of a disinterested and peaceable spirit, which is in GOD'S Sight very costly.
4. For thus, in past times, those holy women, who hoped in GOD, were wont to adorn themselves, being subject to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him "my lord"—whose daughters you also have become, in so far as you do good and are not distracted by any overwhelming terror. Let husbands likewise honour all mankind by living according to knowledge with the female as with the weaker vessel, and by apportioning honour to them as they are also joint-heirs of the real help of life; so that your prayers be not rendered fruitless. And, finally, let all honour humanity by holding one end in view, being compassionate, brotherly, tender-hearted, lowly-

Chapter ii. 13—iii. 12.

19. Matt. v. 44

20. Ps. xxxiv. 12-16

(lxx.)

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 9. | minded, not giving back evil, nor railing for railing, rather, on the contrary, blessing, because to this you were called in order that you should inherit blessing. For :— |
| 10. | He who wills to love life and to see good days, let him refrain tongue from evil and lips that they speak no deceit ; |
| 11. | moreover, let him turn away from evil and towards good, let him seek peace and pursue it ; |
| 12. | because GOD'S eyes are upon the righteous, and His ears towards their supplications ;
moreover GOD'S face ²⁰ is upon evil-doers. |

(Chap. ii 13—iii. 12.) Proceeding from generalities to particulars, obedience to civil government is commauded, because GOD is the ultimate Source of law and order, and in consequence of their Divine origin they are at once useful and necessary. Christianity and its message afford no pretext for assuming licence to do just as we like, but make us free to do as we ought, that is to serve the spirit of the laws of GOD. Christianity has its rule of life towards those without ; it runs : Give, as a habit of life, honour to all

by loving the brotherhood of man, by reverence for the Fatherhood of GOD, and consequently by duly honouring law and order (here personified by the Emperor), which have been constituted as the very girdle of the human society. Wherefore, servants are to honour the office of the master by a due submission, and that apart from the character of the employer. The direr the servant's condition, the more the sign, where cheerful submission is rendered, of his being a subject of Divine help, and there remains to him the deep alleviation of the fact that CHRIST suffered for the lowest; bearing the ignominy of blow and bruise, even the death on the tree. And also there is the obligation to follow His example, and entrust all to the justice of GOD. We best learn to forgive by remembering that all had been lost, but for the seeking and finding of our loving Shepherd and Soul-guardian. Wives, too, must honour their husbands, whether Christian or heathen, winning over these latter by the beauty of holiness rather than by talk, or by beauty of form or attire. In the true beauty of wifehood they will become worthy daughters of the "mothers in Israel" of old, and be freed from any degrad-

Chapter ii. 13—iii. 15.

ing state of nervous scare. Husbands, too, must honour mankind in the persons of their wives, by the wisdom of true courtesy and helpfulness, to those who share with them the gift of life and the power of prayer. Having spoken of the two great relations whence all political life springs—capital and labour—father and mother—the Apostle makes a general exhortation to a common union of aim, affection, sympathy, and to lives which bless rather than stand stiffly on rights. The very object of the Christian's calling being to inherit GOD'S blessing, he must bless and curse not; as David of old taught, and the Greater than David commanded, for GOD'S eyes are alike upon the good and evil, in approval of the one, in disapproval of the other.

13. *For the sake of the Lord.* 'Lord' with St. Peter, except in O.T. quotations, always means CHRIST.—*Alford.*
14. *Imperial agency.* This seems the most natural meaning—but taking it to allude to God we are taught that, despite Nero and his creatures, there was substantial soundness in Roman legislation and actual progress towards social order.
15. *Wilful ignorance.* The Greek ('agnôsia') is more than want of knowledge; it is the culpable want of the sense of the proportion of things. The word occurs in 1 Cor. xv. 34, where the context shows that it means loss of consciousness of God—the exact state of the merely natural or psychical man whose spirit is so dormant that he seems as "not having the spirit" (Jude 19)—by which alone GOD is apprehended. Perhaps the 'wicked ignorance of

Chapter ii. 15-18.

fools' would, if properly understood, best reproduce the phrase. Such men are to be "gagged," because it is the *mouth* of such, rather than their ears or eyes, which are ever open.

16. *Servants of God.* Service is the absolute condition of freedom. The masterless is the worst of all slaves, slave to himself. It is man's glory to be 'masterfast' to GOD. Alford connects, "Be subject" (verse 13) . . . "because you are free." It seems preferable to connect the ideas as follows:—"As free . . . honour all (because they too may be free), love the brotherhood (because it is free), reverence GOD (Whose Service is perfect freedom), honour law and order (GOD'S imperfect—but still GOD'S representative of freedom on earth").
17. *Honour all, etc.* "The fact that there is in every man traces of the image of GOD, after which he had been created, and infinite undeveloped capacities which might issue in the restoration of that image to its original brightness, is in itself a reason for treating all, even the vilest and most degraded (Acts x. 28), with some measure of respect" (Plumptre). Honour is not undue subservience; nor is it mere regard to social and political distinction:

"Rank is but the guinea stamp,
A man's a man for a' that."

The word 'brotherhood' is peculiar to St. Peter. (Cf. Luke xxii. 32). Canon Cook points out that the pregnant conciseness of this verse is a characteristic of St. Peter's style: "Honour all, as occasion arises (the force of the aorist tense in the Greek) corrects the exclusive bigot; love the brotherhood, the sectarian; fear GOD, the infidel; honour, as a continuing habit of mind (the Greek present) the constituted authority—for "order is heaven's first law"—the anarchist.

18. *Servants.* Not necessarily 'slaves.' St. Peter never speaks of men as slaves of men. (Cf. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 23, R.V.) The submission enjoined here cannot be taken to include evil compliance (e.g. to prostitution) such as Roman law held to be duty. But it condemns the rabbinical notion that a Jew ought not to serve an alien, the Essene teaching that it is contrary to nature

Chapter ii. 18-23.

to be servant to any one, and those false modern notions of a fancied independence which consists in absence of service. The verse shows whence the ranks of Christianity were largely recruited, and points a moral in the world's history—that reform has nearly always arisen, and spread, from ruled to ruler, and not vice versa.

Cross-grained. (V. “*dyscolis*,” of which word Latin literature does not seem to furnish any other example.) The word describes those who deviate from right and justice—go crooked! (Cf. Phil. ii. 15; Deut. xxxii. 5.)

19. *State of grace.* The enjoyment of GOD'S real help, freely accorded to those who enter into His will for them. In Luke vi. 32, the same rendering would give a deeper and a better sense: “If ye love them who love you, where is your grace?” Where is the proof that the GOD, Who is kind to the unthankful and the evil, is working in you?”

Consciousness of GOD. That is to say of a man's being born from above in the spiritual part of his nature. (Cf. Jude 19, as cited on verse 15 above.) Who knows GOD, must act worthily of Him: noblesse oblige.

Suffering unjustly. Hereby the Christian shows his life to be ruled by the law of CHRIST—“resist not the evil man,” and also escapes the entanglements of a quarrel, which though perhaps just in origin becomes unjust in conduct. (Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 1, Eph. iv. 26.)

20. “Suffering wrongfully wins the meed of crowns, suffering for faults is the paying off of debts.”—*Isidore of Pelusium*.
21. *To this state.* That is, of patience under suffering; not necessarily suffering wrongfully, but to persistence in right-doing apart from any after-thought as to consequences.

A pattern. A technical word occurring only here in N.T., and meaning an outline copy for art-students to overtrace.

23. *Committed.* What? Grammatically, perhaps, the reviling and suffering. Dr. Farrar suggests “His own and His persecutors' cause.” But it seems preferable to supply from Luke xxiii. 46, His spirit’—that part of His human nature, in which (seeing it

Chapter ii. 23-25—iii. 1.

was ever controlled by the Holy Spirit) He saw these and all things (John ii. 24-25) as they really were.

24. *Having ceased to exist to.* The Greek equivalent occurs only here in the N.T. "A life-long ministry of sacrifice, finished by crucifixion, has bought for man freedom of conscience for the past, freedom of will for the future" (Bampton Lectures, 1858).

Offered up. CHRIST'S Death was more than an example; it was also a ransom—not however paid to the Devil—and a 'Sacrifice.' He, the One True Priest, 'bore up,' and presented on the Altar of the Cross, His own personal excellence for the "sweet savour;" and also presented thereon our sins for their condemnation. The Greek verb 'anapherô' always has, in the N.T., this sacrificial meaning—(Heb. vii. 27, xiii. 15; James ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5), but it is hard to reproduce the idea in an English rendering. CHRIST'S office as sin-bearer is thus not confined to the actual hour of crucifixion. He took and "bore up" our sins from the moment He became man. He purposed to do so from the moment the race was created. He offered our sins up once, on earth, in time, together with His own excellence at Calvary; and evermore, till the Kingdom be fully come, He presents them and offers up His own Efficacious Sacrifice. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is the outward and visible sign to the Church on earth of this great truth. In this true priestly Sacrifice of our Blessed Lord sins pass away, and He impregnates their savour, from death unto death, with the fragrance of Himself—the savour of life unto life.

25. *Guardian of souls.* Special stress is to be laid upon the Incarnate CHRIST'S Bishopric or guardianship of *souls*. It is the reality on which the representative episcopacy of the Catholic Church is founded, and it teaches how He stands between bodily man and GOD, Who is Spirit, for their union. This takes place in man's soul—the meeting-point between body and spirit. Observe in this verse the total absence of all papal-petrine vicarious pretension. (Cf. chap. i. 2.)

1. *The Word.* Collective expression for the whole doctrine of the Will of GOD, contained and witnessed to in Holy Scripture, but

Chapter iii 1-5.

finding its highest exposition and vitality in its source—the living and enduring Word—CHRIST JESUS, our Lord. (Cf. chap. i. 23-25.)

2. *Without word.* Apart from 'talk'—apart from that 'being instant out of season' which, in certain circumstances, works more harm than good, by stiffening opposition. Some make the Greek ('*aneu logou*') equal 'rejecting the word,' but this is against the use of the same preposition elsewhere in N.T. (1 Pet. iv. 9, Matt. x. 29), and contrary to truth—for, though without persistent forcing of doctrine by men man's salvation is possible, yet in *conscious* rejection of the Word of the Father (a rejection which inopportune and ignorant forcing often-times fosters) none will ever be saved. (Acts iv. 12.)
 3. *Whose adorning, etc.* This points to the existence of converts among the more opulent classes. (Cf. v. 2.)
 4. *The hidden humanity.* The inner principle of life—the soul whose function is to control the body by being itself controlled by the spirit; and whose working men do not see, but feel. "The inner man," writes Clement of Alexandria, "is the rational nature which controls the outer man."
- Very costly.* Perhaps a reference to Mary's alabaster box of unguent, which the 'son of waste' (John xvii. 12) stigmatized as 'waste,' but which CHRIST approved. Just so the modern 'sons of waste' would set up women to do things they were never intended to do; and stigmatize as 'waste' woman's true work done quietly and without parade, in its own proper sphere, the home—a "very costly" offering, which GOD approves.
5. *For thus those holy women, etc.* 'Thus,' with such incorruptible ornaments. It is important to notice that the duty of the good woman's, and true wife's, due subordination (as that of the servant in relation to the master) remains intact—and the injunction of our Apostle is, and will be, until "the restitution of all things" of universal application on earth. It is quite true that the distinction of the sexes, in so far as spiritual rights go (*i.e.* as far as the powers of, and for, the higher life are concerned), is abolished among the citizens of Heaven, "there can be no male

Chapter iii. 5-7.

and female" (Gal. iii. 28), but it must be preserved, as far as regards practical purposes, in the life that now is, for order and for seemliness. St. Paul, as St. Peter, is emphatic on this point of woman's due subordination, and the mystical union of CHRIST with His Church, as of Husband and Bride, ratifies it. So that the modern 'rights of women' agitations, and 'equality of the sexes' cry are right enough in *idea*—prophetic (as popular cries so often blindly are) of the fact that in CHRIST'S Perfect Kingdom "can be neither male nor female"—but wrong in present practical outcome, as being a premature snatching at that future perfection of existence for which poor mortality, with its corruptions and weakness, is, at present, eminently unfitted. St. Paul had taught in Asia Minor (Gal. iv. 22 sqq.) that Sarah as a type of the true church was 'free;' yet she was in subjection to her husband, calling him 'lord.' In truth, the Church's service to its Lord, the true wife's to her husband—as all true service—is freedom—the real freedom of orderly movement in the sphere of duty: to be subject to none is to be bond-slave to the devil, whose god is self. (See chap. ii. 16.)

6. A reference probably to the scare of Sarah and Abraham when in danger, and the dishonest shifts to which it led them. (Cf. Prov. iii. 25, and see notes on ii. 6.)

7. *Living with.* ('Cohabitanter,' Vulgate.) This covers all the relations of married life.

'According to knowledge.' That is to say, preserving a due sense of proportion;* neither degrading the wife into a concubine, nor making her a drudge, nor leaving her (in the godless fashionable-world way) to go her course while the husband pursues his; nor, on the other hand, suffering her to usurp the rule of the house; but treating her as an honoured associate in the daily work of life, a sharer in its highest hopes and duties, the mother of children to be brought up 'in the nurture and admonition

* The prevalence of utter loss of sense of proportion, in other words of mental incapacity, among people generally regarded as sane, is lamentable. Equally lamentable is the general absence of childlike children—nearly all the young are little anxious, fussy, men and women. Is the latter to the former as cause to effect?

Chapter iii. 7-15.

the Lord,' the mistress of servants to whom also she has of obligations.

Real help of life. See notes on i. 13; ii. 4.

Rendered fruitless. "Two hearts at variance with each other will not offer the common incense of prayer, nor can husband and wife bring singly and separately an acceptable offering—while labouring under the sense of unrequited or unforgiven wrong."
—*Canon Cook.*

8. *Finally, etc.* In this verse the Apostle passes to Christian conduct towards those without.

9. *That you should inherit blessing.* This does not mean 'other-worldliness'—that we are to bless *in order that we may be blessed*; but that we are to bless *because we have been blessed*. Compare the teaching in Eph. iv. 32, "forgiving each other, even as GOD also, in CHRIST forgave us."

10. *He who willeth, etc.* The LXX. Version (whence this quotation comes) reads: "What man is he that would fain see life, loving good days?" The teaching of verses 10-12 is: Discharge your duties because GOD sees you. The consequence of neglect of this rule is a state of mind vividly depicted in Ecclesiastes ii. 17: "So I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun was grievous unto me: for all is vanity and a striving after wind." Peace is to be 'pursued'—because few good things are easily overtaken. "Because" in verse 12 is inserted by the Apostle.

1. Isa. viii. 12-13

13. And who shall permanently work evil to you, if it is what is good of which
14. you become emulators? Moreover, even should you suffer for the cause of righteousness you are happy. But "be not afraid with any fear of them, neither be disturbed, rather venerate the Jehovah — CHRIST" — in your hearts; ready, indeed, always

Such light-bearing removes man beyond permanent harm; and if it bring present suffering that is an increase of Christian privilege; for besides doing good to spectators, and being in itself a higher state than that of deserved punishment,

(13-17.)

Chapter iii. 13-17.

2. { 1 Thess. v. 21
 { 1 Cor. x. 15

16. for defence to every man asking from you an account concerning the hope that is in you, but with disinterestedness and fear, having a good conscience, in order that, wherein-soever you are spoken against, they who clamour against your lovely conduct in CHRIST may be put to shame.
17. For it is better to do good, and, if the will of GOD so will, suffer, than to do evil.

(Chap. iii. 13-16.) As GOD and good must conquer in the end, why need the Christian feel any coward fear of permanent harm (and is it not the sense of this fear which leads man to curse his enemy?) from any quarter if only he zealously follow what is good? Retaliation does but stir up strife, kindness overcomes it. CHRIST said of personal suffering for well-doing: It is blessed. Let the Christian, then, set CHRIST as the Revealed GOD upon the throne of his intelligence, and he will lose the fear of man, and stand ready to offer a reasonable defence of the hope that is in him to any enquirer. This defence is no defiance; it is apart from any thought of gain, and is to be made in that awe which dreads to weaken, by its necessarily limited outlook, the Majesty of GOD'S Cause. A good

Chapter iii. 14-16.

	<p>confession thus witnessed, the conscience will be kept free of offence, and the creed acted-out will allure calumniators into that cleansing shame which fore-runs repentance.</p>	
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14. *Cause of righteousness.* That is to say, on account of their faith and life.

15. *The Jehovah—CHRIST.* The MSS. readings are very various, the better ones giving (according to Dean Plumptre) 'the Lord CHRIST.' This is the version of the Vulgate, which Bengel here follows. Luther reads: "Heiliget aber Gott der Herrn;" Ostervald: "Le Seigneur vôte Dieu." The translation of the Hebrew version of Isaiah is "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself," the LXX. giving 'Lord of might' or 'mights.' We have translated Lord by Jehovah in accordance with Alford's canon. (See ii. 13.) Whatever the exact reading or rendering, the passage inculcates the belief that there is no salvation for man, but in One—and points out that *a sound foundation of belief is as requisite to the Christian as morality of life.* The words 'in your hearts' (i.e. 'in your intelligence') are added by the Apostle, and form no part of the quotation.

Ready for defence. The very object of the letter seems to be the re-assurance of Christians, during actual and impending persecution, by the thought that they and all men were in the real help of GOD, which cannot fail them, if only they hold to it. Of St. Peter, a modern Swiss theologian (E. Devainé) well says: "Ce qu'il proclame, c'est l'université du salut. Personne ne doit être condamné sans avoir été placé dans les conditions nécessaires pour le connaître, sans avoir refusé sciemment d'écouter et de suivre la parole de vérité."

With disinterestedness, etc. There is to be no element of self-seeking in the Christian apologist—just as there was none in Moses (Numbers xii. 3: LXX.)—he is not to seek to make any gain by his confession of hope; and it is to be offered with proper respect

Chapter iii. 15-20.

for man, and humble reverence for GOD. How utterly this is opposed to the cruel denunciations of those who call themselves orthodox, to authors who write, and publishers who publish, only such religious works as will pay, and to the arrogant finality of dogmatists, let this age of ours bear its sufficient witness! With regard to the necessary 'reverence' or 'fear' Luther (as quoted by Alford) has some excellent remarks: "Then must ye not answer with proud words, and bring out the matter with a defiance and with violence as if ye would tear up trees, but with such fear and lowliness, as if ye stood before God's tribunal. . . . So must thou stand in fear, and not rest on thine own strength, but on the word and promise of CHRIST."

16. *Having a good conscience.* Bishop Wordsworth (*in loco*) says: "A good conscience (Acts xxiii. 1, Heb. xiii. 18) is one which governs itself by sound reason, and applies to itself, for its own regulation, the rule of GOD'S Will, especially as revealed in His Word." The outcome of life so ruled is the alluring "sweetness and light"—the 'lovely conduct'—spoken of by St. Peter in this verse.

In CHRIST. This shows the Divine Nature (St. John v. 26, vi. 57) in which the true Christian lives, and moves, and has his being.

1. Rom. v. 6	18. For also CHRIST has suffered on	such suffering becomes an increase of conformity to CHRIST, and so affords more intimate entrance into His universal Redemptive Work—here and hereafter—into which work, just as Noah's flood upbore the saving Ark, the anti-typical water of true Baptism, by upbearing the Ark of CHRIST'S Church, carries us on.
2. Eph. ii. 18	account of sins once, the Just One on	
3. { Rom. i. 3, 4 1 Tim. iii. 16	behalf of unjust ones, in order that	
4. { Acts ii. 31 Eph. iv. 9 Rev. i. 18 "He descended into Hades"	He might bring us near to GOD,	
	having, indeed, been put to death	
	with regard to flesh but having been	
	restored to life with regard to spirit,	
	19. in which spirit also, having gone, He	
	made proclamation to the spirits in	
	20. ward, who were once upon a time	
	opponents; when the long-suffering	
	of GOD was waiting in the days of	(18-23.)

Chapter iii. 17-22.

5. Gen. vi. 13, sqq.		⁵ Noah, while the ark was being prepared : by having entered into which
6. Titus iii. 5		a few persons, that is to say, eight
7. Rom. vi. 45		lives, were preserved by the medium
8. Eph. iv. 9		of water, and its anti-typical ⁶ water is
9. Matt. xxviii 18	21.	now saving us also, even baptism (not
		the putting away of the flesh's filth,
		but the enquiry which a good conscience makes after GOD) through
		the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST, ⁷
	22.	Who is at the right hand of GOD, ⁸
		having gone unto heaven, angels and
		authorities and powers being made ⁹
		subject to Him.

(Chap. iii. 17-22) Moreover, it is a higher moral state to suffer as an innocent man than as a guilty one, for so did our Lord suffer—that Just One Who gave His life for us unjust—that we might have access to the GOD Who desires our return. So firmly did CHRIST'S Will enter into the Will of His Father for all men to come to the knowledge of the Truth, that though injustice could kill His human body, He was made alive as regards His human spirit, and in that sphere of His Being went, and announced the good tidings of yet possible salvation to certain representative disembodied spirits, undergoing deserved retributive and corrective punishment — to those who resisted calls to

Chapter iii. 18-22.

repentance, and made light of GOD'S forbearance, when Noah was building the ark, in which only eight human beings were then preserved by means of water. The water of the flood, at once preservative and destructive, foreshadowed, in the Apostle's judgment, the waters of Baptism, which still overwhelm to their own places those who refuse to enter into the ark of CHRIST'S Church, but up-bear those who do so enter into the purified Kingdom of CHRIST. Such entrance is, however, no mere formal matter, no outward purification of the body, but Baptism makes us safe by conveying to the spirit of those who come to the true Church (as Noah came to his ark, in conscientious repentance and faith) union with the Life of Him, by Whom alone we have, through the Spirit, access to the Father—union with our Risen Lord, Who has ascended into heaven, and to Whom the homage of heaven, earth, and under-world is to be rendered.

18. *Near to God.* The Greek ('*tôi Theôi*') is pregnant, and equals "to GOD, with His concurrence." It might be paraphrased "to GOD, desiring to save." This access for man to GOD is the object of CHRIST'S Redemptive Work. The language of our second article of religion, which says CHRIST suffered "to reconcile His Father to us" in the light of this teaching of St. Peter, deviates from the sound rule of true Catholic Faith.

Chapter iii. 18.

Compare 2 Cor. v. 18-20, where our reconciliation to GOD through CHRIST, not GOD'S reconciliation to us, is the point emphatically insisted on.

As regards flesh . . . as regards spirit. The Man, CHRIST JESUS, was as regards His flesh the recipient of inflicted death—as regards His spirit, the recipient of restored life—for the word ‘quicken’d’ of the A.V. (‘*zōpoiētheis*’) means ‘brought to life,’ not ‘kept alive.’ The A.V. rendering “by the *Spirit*” undoubtedly intended to convey the meaning that the Divine Spirit vivified the dead CHRIST. It is of course true that the Holy Spirit—the Lord and Giver-of-Life—is the bringer about of any possible risen life, but as a rendering in this place, it is indefensible, for such is neither the language employed, nor does it convey the obvious meaning of the Apostle. The Vulgate, in this passage rightly reads ‘*spiritu*.’ There is a Latin text (Codex Amiatinus) which has the reading “*mortificatos et vivificatos*”—that is to say, *we*, who are brought to GOD, are put to death in flesh but brought to life in spirit—a curiously instructive gloss, showing in what respective spheres the transcriber deemed, and rightly deemed, death and resurrection to work. But the comparison, in this verse of our Letter, really is between the human flesh and the human spirit of the Man CHRIST JESUS; between that human body (sense-consciousness) in respect of which He was subject to death, and His human spirit in respect of which He knew GOD (John vii. 29, viii. 55), sorrowed (Mark viii. 12), was troubled (John xiii. 21), and which organ of spiritual-mindedness He commended to GOD (Luke xxiii. 46), and resigned into His Father’s keeping (Matt. xxvii. 50, John xix. 30). It was in His human spirit—the perfect GOD-consciousness resulting from a sinless life lived GOD-wards and man-wards, and so in His case ‘a spirit of holiness’ (Rom. i. 4), that our Lord as man ‘waxed strong,’ and became master of His soul (or self-consciousness), King of Himself and of the race which finds its perfection in Him. In all other men, until they reach the measure of the fulness of CHRIST, there resides a residue of the perfect human spirit only,

Chapter iii. 18-19.

in the *conscience*, the knowledge that one has with oneself of Another greater than self. Hence it is, perhaps, that we never read in Scripture of the *conscience* of JESUS. In our Lord's case His earthly ministry was 'straitened' (Luke xii. 50) by the conditions of His human body. He could do no more than preach in person to a few of His age and land, and He became exposed to death, and really suffered it in the flesh—but in the act of dying, because death in His case was the very climax of loving self-sacrifice, His human spirit, prior to the resurrection of His body, was made alive, and showed its energy and activity in a new and wider sphere of beneficent soul-enterprise. Death became the gate of fuller freer Life, for

19. *Having gone, He made proclamation to the spirits in ward, etc.* This account of the descent of CHRIST into the place of departed spirits, held as truth by St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, taught by the Catholic Creed, believed in east and west, handed on by all the Fathers, and foreshadowed dimly (as becomes the very idea of a progressive revelation) by many a place of Old Testament prophecy, we propose to consider in seven sections.

1. *When did this descent take place?* In the interval between the death of our Lord's body on the Cross at Calvary and His Resurrection from the tomb of Joseph. Against the idea of many a teacher, which has been popularized by Milton (*Paradise Lost*, book xi. 723), that Noah is 'the preacher' referred to, as warning the men of his generation, in the spirit of CHRIST, the fact is advanced that the *Personal* CHRIST is the subject throughout the sentence. Against the idea that the descent here referred to means the Incarnation generally, we have the fact that CHRIST came into the world body, soul, and spirit—and as perfect man in fleshly form taught men in the flesh—whereas the text affirms Him to have gone somewhere *out of the flesh*, and there to have preached to certain beings in like condition of existence. If it be asked whence St. Peter derived the statements considered in this section, the only safe answer appears to be that the promised Holy Spirit, Who should guide men to all the truth, enabled him to receive, perceive, and repro-

Chapter iii. 19.

duce the teaching of CHRIST Himself (John v. 25, among other places)—and especially the esoteric teaching of those forty days subsequent to the Resurrection (Luke xxiv. 27-44, Acts i. 3).

11. *To whom did our Lord go?* To certain disembodied spirits, existent as to their souls (otherwise they had no personality) and spirits—the physically dead in the estimate of those alive on earth (see note on ‘the dead,’ chap. iv. 5-6). To those He went, as really as some forty days after He ‘went’ out of His followers’ sight. To assert with Clement of Alexandria that CHRIST visited only those spirits ‘righteous according to their light’ (‘kata philosophian’) is against the plain statement of the Apostle, who says they were ‘opponents,’ and therefore as untenable as is the assertion of Calvin that they were ‘the just’ of the O.T. history. In order to establish this point Calvin endeavours (contradicting his other terrible assertion, which we shall notice later on) to make out that the spirits to whom CHRIST preached had already repented, and were on a ‘watch-tower’ looking out for Him—among the lost spirits, indeed, but not of them. Calvin confesses that the rules of Greek grammar will not allow this meaning to be extracted from St. Peter’s words, but as St. Peter is, in his judgment, mixing up many matters (“videmus Petrum hic confuse multas res simul coacervare”) he (Calvin) therefore has not hesitated so to translate as to distinguish good spirits from bad spirits in order that his readers may know (not what the letter says, but) what St. Peter meant!! A process, alas, all too common, and by which Scripture can be made to yield any meaning the expositor wishes to give it—and, in this particular case, a calm statement of procedure which should make candid minds cautious as to the general worth of the Calvinistic method of Scriptural interpretation.

111. *Where were these spirits?* ‘In ward,’ that is all St. Peter tells us. In other words, in some of those many abodes (Greek ‘monai’) of the Father’s House, of which our Lord spoke. And when He, to calm men’s ‘troubled’ hearts, goes on to add: “If it were not so I would have told you,” may we not fairly hope that He means that had there been no place for repentance beyond

Chapter iii. 19.

the grave, and consequently no chance of attaining a better state, He would have plainly said so? In the "many dwelling-places," then, in Abraham's bosom with Lazarus, in Paradise with the changed robber, in torment undergoing deserved retributive and corrective punishment with Dives—their respective 'places' varying with their moral condition—these spirits were, but all of them "in ward," some perhaps "prisoners of hope looking to the stronghold," awaiting 'the place' CHRIST promises to prepare. Eden itself became man's prison when he disobeyed the laws of his being; the ideal Man alone can bring 'deliverance to the captives,' who though not necessarily all in *penal* durance still all need freeing, and are only finally to be freed by willing recognition of truth.

iv. *Why did our Lord go?* To make proclamation. Of what? Of the good news of salvation. The verb ('kerussô')—here used absolutely—occurs fifteen times in N.T. Greek, and invariably of announcing the glad tidings of GOD'S "thoughts of peace." But supposing this were not so, chap. iv. 6, which tells of "the glad tidings preached even to the dead" sets the tenor of this proclamation at rest. And yet many have dared (following the contradictory (see § ii.) lead of Calvin) to teach, in spite of the plain meaning of the Apostle's words, in spite of common morality which refrains from insulting a fallen foe, in spite of the evangelical prophet's tender assurance concerning CHRIST that "a bruised reed will He not break and smoking flax will He not quench," in spite of CHRIST'S "I, if I am lifted up, will draw *all* men unto Me," in spite of conscience in GOD'S sight which tells us that GOD'S Love must needs be Infinite—have dared to teach that the Ever-Blessed JESUS, Who came to seek and to save that which was lost, Who is the Same yesterday, to-day, and unto the ages, in the very moment of His Victory over death, and fresh from prayers for those who deemed themselves His foes, went first of all to the abode of sinners of the old world, whom He Himself had declared less guilty than the sinners whose earth He had just left (Luke x. 13), to accentuate the misery of the already-damned by proclaiming to them the

Chapter iii. 19.

utter certainty of their irretrievable and endless damnation! And they have further dared to foist in this baleful, hopeless, savage meaning into the very midst of a passage which a Christian Apostle intended to convey consolation to sorrowful souls, by pointing them on to the ever-widening and joyous results of CHRIST'S victory!

v. *In what condition of existence did our Lord go?* In His disembodied state, in His human spirit, which involves, for the maintenance of personality, the accompaniment of His soul. We have endeavoured to deal (as far as so deep a mystery can be dealt with) with this in the note on verse 18. As He came on earth, body, soul, and spirit to men of the same tripartite nature, so He went in soul and spirit to the disembodied souls and spirits of the intermediate state.

vi. *To what class of spirits did He make proclamation?* To a section of those 'in ward,' namely to the obstinate refusers to repent, when Noah warned—and GOD waited. It is not a little significant how the misleading blight of dogmatic bias led Ostervald to translate "*lorsque . . . la patience de Dieu attendait pour la dernière fois,*" in the very teeth of this assertion of re-offered mercy to those formerly impenitent. We are not told the result of this proclamation among the class addressed. We are told its purpose in iv. 6. The foregoing sections deal with what Scripture tells of the descent of CHRIST into Hades, and that the English Church (as any branch of the Catholic Church is bound to do) teaches the truth of this event having taken place, in the natural and obvious sense of the words, seems proved by the fact that it appoints as epistle for Easter Eve, 1 Pet. iii. 17-22.

vii. *Inferences from the whole account.* It clearly implies a continuance of our Lord's Mediatorial Work in the unseen world. He did visit certain souls and spirits 'in ward,' and to them He did make proclamation of the good news of salvation. It is quite true that the real incidents of that Personal Preaching cannot occur again any more than that the real incidents of His Life on earth in great humility will

Chapter iii. 19.

occur again; but the spirit and purpose of both the earthly Ministry and of the Mission in Hades exist evermore—as long as the race of living and dead need a Saviour, in virtue of His being “JESUS CHRIST, the Same yesterday, to-day, and unto the ages.” It is true He has gone back, carrying Humanity with Him, to the Glory He had from everlasting, but yet *all the more fully* does His Power—that power acquired, in the days of His flesh, of entrance *as man* into the Will of GOD, that “obedience learnt by the things which He suffered” (Heb. ii. 9, v. 8)—extend thence to the utmost mysterious limits of the invisible world; and the seed of life He then planted, by His proclamation to the spirits ‘in ward,’ shall surely continue to grow to the salvation of humanity. We know (Acts vii. 55-56 and other places) that His Session in Heaven does not suspend His interest in the home of embodied men (indeed all the false sectarian teaching now so rampant, and especially all Romish teaching, rests on the untrue idea of an *absent* instead of a *present* CHRIST)—why then should we suppose that it suspends His interest in the place of departed spirits? Consider what a completeness this priceless revelation adds to the view of our Blessed Lord’s Work. Before His Incarnation He planned for man, in His flesh He toiled and suffered for man, in His re-invested Majesty, as their Elder Brother, He pleads for His brethren, and in the interim between death and resurrection He makes it possible for Hadean man to “profit by this supreme opportunity and to cast himself into the arms of His Mercy” (Reuss). Consider, too, the intense comfort of this doctrine. As it shows CHRIST’S human Soul and Spirit unimpaired by death, why should we suppose death likely to impair ours? “I am . . . the Living One; and I became dead, and behold I am alive unto the ages of the ages, and I have the keys of death and of Hades” (Rev. i. 18). By the very fact of going into Hades CHRIST shows the region of departed spirits to be under His control, subject to His influence, and included in His purposes of mercy. And again in His disembodied state His love remained the same, and reached out to by-gone generations—and if so shall it not much more in

Chapter iii. 19.

His glorified state extend also to future generations? The inference from the whole account is that, in the case of the impenitent as well as of the penitent, Death cannot divide from the LOVE OF GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our Lord. And this inference is in direct contradiction to the unfounded teaching that man's *everlasting* condition is fixed, once for all, at the moment of the physical death of the body; or, in other words, popular but false, that "there is no possibility of repentance beyond the grave." On the other hand the account, taken as a whole, does not teach that *all* will be saved. To do so, even inferentially, it would have been needful for us to be assured that all those 'in ward' who heard the proclamation repented. We are told nothing of the result of this proclamation. But we may fairly assume from the analogy of the parabolic prison-history of Joseph, and from the known historical effects of CHRIST'S preaching on earth, that some did repent and were delivered out of prison—and who is any man to dare to limit the efficacy of such preaching, by such a Preacher, in such conditions? There seems to be a hint of the result of the preaching in Rev. v. 13—all created things (surely man comes under this category) *under* the earth join in the praises of the Lamb. (Cf. note on verse 22). Again, in the mention that our Lord's preaching was confined to a section of those 'in ward'—or at any rate, the revelation *to us* about that preaching is so confined—there seems to be a clue as to how the efficacy and occurrence of His preaching were to continue in result. To suppose such result to be confined to that section, which is alone described in the letter as under its possible influence, is against the analogy of GOD'S dealings with man through CHRIST. He has ever dealt out His 'thoughts of peace' through a class to the race—through Abraham's family, through the Jews, through CHRIST'S 'little flock,' through the Catholic Church. Why not then through a class of 'under-world sinners to the race of under-world sinners? Why those of Noah's day were selected would seem (in the light of this) to be because it is in the days of Noah that we have the first record of

Chapter iii. 19-21.

race-apostasy (Gen. vi. 8) as distinct from acts of individual rebellion. The whole passage, Dean Alford observed, 'throws blessed light on cases where the doom seems out of proportion to the lapse.' But it does more. It distinctly asserts the good news of salvation to have been told to those beyond the grave; and, as GOD'S Purposes are changeless, implies that such good news is still being told there. If the telling of such news in such conditions could not possibly, in the nature of things, have any result—such a proclamation could only be a cruel mockery. How can we, who hold that CHRIST came to bear witness to Truth, dare to impute such action to Him? Wherefore repentance must be possible even beyond the grave. A revelation which is a very gospel of Hope for all men, and a fitting utterance for him to whom it was commanded "When thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 32).

20. *While the ark was being prepared.* Literally of Noah's ark, figuratively and prophetically of the Ark of CHRIST'S Church. The commandment to the Apostles and their successors to "baptize" constituted them, like Noah, inviters of men into the Ark of safety, and also made the waters of Baptism into a sort of flood to those who refuse their call. Tertullian calls the flood the 'baptism of the world.' It is the thought of the dual consequences of the flood which apparently leads St. Peter on to the subsequent reference to Christian Baptism—the mention of the waters of destruction raising in the Apostle's mind, in orderly development, the idea of the water of safety, and further showing the harmony of those various dealings of GOD with man, which have the Incarnation for their central event.
21. *Its anti-typical water, etc.* Ostervald's version of this verse is an admirable illustration of the saying that 'what is not clear is not French.' It runs: "A quoi (i.e. flood-water) aussi répond maintenant comme à une figure la baptême qui nous sauve: non pas celui qui nettoie les ordures du corps, mais l'engagement d'une bonne conscience devant Dieu, par la résurrection de JESUS CHRIST." The type is the prefiguring thing—the flood; the anti-type is the thing prefigured—Baptism.

Chapter iii. 21.

baptizmal vow, has plenty of strong grounds for its defence, use, and retention. It is the witness to a GOD-forsaking world that all souls born into it are GOD'S children, and it puts those who partake in it into the position to claim their privilege. But none the less infant Baptism cannot be supposed to be here referred to, or even contemplated.

Not the putting away of the flesh's filth. There is, in these words of St. Peter, the most direct and strongest condemnation for those misguided superstitionists—and for those who so speak of the exaggerated efficacy of the mere mechanical use of the Sacraments as to misguide (under which indictment fall nearly all the sacramental manual-writers of this day)—who suppose that any mere outward rite, no matter how decently administered, or how frequently attended, has any saving power whatsoever apart from the consenting activity of the moral consciousness of those using the means of grace, the Sacraments of Holy Baptism or Holy Communion. Christian Baptism is no mere Jewish lustration (John iii. 25). "What boots a baptism which cleanseth but the flesh? Be ye baptized in your souls."—*Justin Martyr*. And compare Rom. ii. 28-29, substituting 'Christian' for 'Jew,' and 'baptism' for 'circumcision.'

But the enquiry, etc. The translation 'answer of a good conscience' which the A.V. gives cannot be justified, and the idea that there is any reference whatever to the questions and answers—a sort of Catechism—of some (supposed) Apostolic Rite of Baptism seems extremely improbable. The words point to the fact that for Baptism to be a valid entrance into the Catholic Church man must play his part in the matter, he must think differently of his duty towards GOD from the conventional view of the matter, and he must believe that in union with JESUS CHRIST is to be found, and in Him only, the full pattern of, and power of obedience to, the code of the new life (Acts xx. 21). Where these requisites are actually present, as in the case of the faithful adults, or provisionally present and thereafter (if life be continued) to be personally realized as in the case of the infant brought by faithful sponsors to the font, then Baptism instrumentally

Chapter iii. 21.

Is saving us also. Note the force of the present tense—the rescue has begun, and is in operation, but it is not yet fully accomplished. “At first it seems hard to see the parallelism between the flood which destroyed and the Baptism which is saving, but reflection will show that the Apostle may well have thought of the deluge as burying the old evils of the world, and giving the human race, as it were, a fresh start, under new and brighter conditions, a world in some sense, regenerated or brought into a new covenant with GOD, and therefore new relations to Him. Does not the teaching of the previous verse suggest the inference that he thought of the flood as having been even for those who perished in it not merely an instrument of destruction, but as placing the souls of the disobedient in a region in which they were not shut out from the pitying love of the Father, Who there also did not ‘will that any should perish’?”—*Dean Plumptre.*

Even Baptism. The water which saved Noah and his seven, drowned the bodies of the impenitent or ignorant rejectors—so too Baptism drowns the unregenerate nature in each individual, and saves the true man in the true Ark with CHRIST. Baptism saves, and is effectual, spiritually; the outward sign is one thing, the inward real help is another. Both parts of the Sacrament are necessary to man in his present state; but while the outward part may be shared by all, the inward, equally open to the acceptance of all, is really confined to those who accept its conditions. It is just the same with the other CHRIST-founded Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—to which, however, there is in this letter no reference, probably because it never occurred to the writer's mind that any Christian could require to be reminded of its significance, as alas, subsequent Church history, and notably that of these days, does show to be lamentably necessary. The Baptism our Apostle here contemplates is undoubtedly the adult baptism of those aware what they were about when they took their share in its performance. Infant baptism, when followed, as in the Catholic Church, by the rite of Confirmation, which insists upon the conscious taking upon himself or herself by the baptized of the obligation of the Christian

Chapter iii. 21-22.

conveys the real help—the grace—of birth from above, then “Baptism is saving us.” (Luther’s “Uns selig machet.”) Otherwise Baptism is a mockery, and on the everlasting prohibition of the second Commandment, it can only be harmful to all concerned to play with solemnities. “The enquiry which a good conscience makes after GOD” is the searching after GOD which takes place when our GOD-consciousness, our conscience—the residue of the spirit within each one of us, so dormant in very many cases that the natural or psychical man is described in Scripture as being without it (James ii. 26, Jude 19)—awakes to fuller life, and from being merely an accusing or excusing power within us (Rom. ii. 15) becomes a witness to us of GOD, and of the things of God, renders us ‘spiritual men discerning spiritual things,’ and so rises to be a really ‘good conscience.’ So in Ezekiel xiv. 3, 7, xx. 1-3, the Lord refuses to be ‘enquired of’ on account of men’s defiled conscience. The sense within oneself that one is striving one’s best to understand what the Will of GOD is, with a view to doing that Will, is to have a good conscience, and the possession of a good conscience is the realization of full and true Baptism. (Cf. Heb. x. 22.)

Through the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST. These words are, of course, in immediate connection with ‘even Baptism’ above—all between being merely explanatory matter. Baptism derives its saving efficacy from CHRIST, and CHRIST only. It works among men by bringing them into union with the Risen Life of Him Who has made change of mind, and belief, and, consequently, possession of a good conscience, possible to the sons of men. But if this CHRIST be not raised from the dead, faith is vain; we are, for all CHRIST did on earth, yet in our sins, in the region in which death works. This is why St. Peter is careful to add “through the *resurrection* of JESUS CHRIST,” an expression which declares the continuance of His saving work, “Who was raised for our justification.” (Rom. iv. 25.)

22. *Having gone up into Heaven.* Here we find exactly the same participle (‘poreutheis’) as in verse 19: so that—as far as words have any weight—if there was a real Ascension into Heaven

Chapter iii. 22—iv. 4.

present to the writer's mind, there was also a real descent into Hades. It is a noticeable fact that with St. Peter it is the Ascension which is the culminating point of all CHRIST'S work for man. This is seen in his speeches recorded in the Acts, in this statement here, and in the last chapter of St. Mark's gospel, which is generally regarded as having been written under St. Peter's supervision. The Vulgate inserts before these words—"deglutiens mortem."

Being made subject to Him. The 'angels, authorities, and powers' seem to express, in another way, the over-world, world, and under-world of Phil. ii. 10; and, if so, this is yet another note of our Petrine Gospel of Hope. If we go down into Hades CHRIST'S Sceptre reaches thereto, and where He reigns shall not at length light, and love, and life come?

"Hope, below this, consists not with belief
in mercy, carried infinite degrees
beyond the tenderness of human hearts:
hope, below this, consists not with belief
in perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
that finds no limits but its own pure will."

<p>1. Rom. vi. 6-7</p> <p>2. { 1 Thess. iv. 3 2 Pet. iii. 9</p>	<p>C. iv.</p> <p>1. CHRIST therefore, having suffered as regards flesh, put on as armour also</p> <p>2. the same way of thinking, because he who suffered as regards flesh has¹ ceased from sins, in order to his no longer passing the time which remains in the flesh by the desires of men, but² by the will of God. For sufficient is the time which has passed away to have practised what the heathen would have you do when you lived in excesses, lusts, wine-swillings, carousings, drinking-bouts, and unlawful orgies, in regard to which they are amazed that you rush not on, as of course you cannot, into the same sink</p>	<p>Exhortation to consistent conformity with CHRIST: which involves entire separation from the ungodliness of the world's ways, in order to the rescue of humanity from a flesh-bound to a spirit-ruled existence.</p> <p>(Ch. iv. 1-6.)</p>
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Chapter iv. 1-6.

3. { Acts ii. 17 1 Cor. v. 5 1 Cor. vi. 17 Rom. viii. 10 Rev. v. 13 John v. 25-28	5. of debauchery, and <i>thereupon</i> blaspheme. But they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to 6. judge living and dead. For even to the dead, to this very end, were the glad tidings told that they might be judged, after the manner of men, with regard to flesh, but that they may continue to live, after the manner determined by GOD, with regard to <div style="text-align: center;">3</div> spirit.	
	(Chap. iv. 1-6.) After the foregoing digression (which shows the result of CHRIST'S sufferings on account of sins, as they affect humanity (iii. 18-22) the Apostle admonishes his readers to arm themselves for life's sufferings with the same purpose their Master held in view—namely GOD'S glory and man's good. For such true suffering is curative, and shall free men from sin by unbinding them from the glamour of the wicked world, and by showing them things as they really are; and, moreover, it is to such an end that Christians are exposed to suffering in order that they may no longer be torn by the manifold desires of men, but learn to live in the unity of GOD'S Will. Enough, and more than enough, have they, now born from above, known in themselves, and in their experience of	

Chapter iv. 1-6.

the race, of the windy ways of men, they have long enough dwelt among them who are enemies to peace, and because the true Church will no longer go on the world's way, such suffering is inevitable—the world's defamation, as of old so now, is to be expected. Trial and righteous judgment await all—living and dead alike. The Lord will come to convince the world of sin, and for that very reason were the glad tidings announced also to the dead that though they suffered loss as regards flesh, after the divinely-ordered manner of human justice, they might live as regards spirit, after the Will of GOD, Which is that none should perish.

1. *The same way of thinking.* The argument is resumed from iii. 18. There CHRIST is said to have suffered to reconcile men to GOD. Now a further, and prior, reason for these sufferings is shown, namely to bring about a state of holiness, without which no man can see GOD. CHRIST, having thus suffered, has nothing further to do with sin, as regards atonement. The 'way of thinking,' which is the armour of the spiritual warfare, is to be the same which was in the soul of the perfect Man—namely that it is truly moral to suffer when called upon to bring about the good of the brotherhood and its reconciliation to the Father. Indeed, suffering met and undergone in this spirit puts an end to contact with sin. Herein is the condemnation of the ascetic's dream that there is any merit whatever in suffering for suffering's sake—a dream which is immoral from its calculated selfishness, in that it proposes to barter so much pain here for so much pleasure hereafter.

Chapter iv. 1-4.

Ceased from sin. The man who has got at the true lessons of real suffering is, as it were, crucified to that portion of the world's life where sin is dominant; and henceforward lives, with whatever slowly expiring taints about him, above the aims of the world. And it is to effect this very end that suffering comes.

2. *Passing, etc.* The Greek verb ('biôsai') is never used of mere animal life, but of the rational careers of men. Notice, too, that while 'the desires of men' are many, 'the Will of GOD' is one.
3. *When you lived.* This proves the epistle to have been addressed to Christians generally and not exclusively to (as many commentators maintain) converts from Judaism. The 'excesses, lusts, wine-swillings' are, perhaps, to be regarded as personal forms of the social evils of 'carousings, drinking-bouts, unlawful orgies.'
4. *They are amazed.* To a community which, at its most civilized centre, regarded a gladiatorial show as a hunt, and felt a thrill of joy at the slaughter of 200,000 Helvetians by Cæsar, or half a million Jews by Titus, which had no doubt (as polished Pliny testifies) that those who declined to give up opinions at the State's bidding, though those opinions were allowed to be harmless, were worthy of cruel deaths, which regarded the commonest honesty and decency as a 'prodigy worthy of record in prophetic books' (Juvenal xiii. 62), which looked on infanticide perpetrated by a friend as a mere prudent measure of household economy, and in the domestic annals of which we find high nobles and dignified matrons guilty of such abominable bestiality as would revolt the slums of our vilest cities, while the lower ranks were sunk in a degradation which modern language has no terms to describe—a life ruled, however dimly and imperfectly, on the lines of Christian principle must have appeared, and did appear, as little short of a social monstrosity. All of which considerations should teach, the thinking student of GOD'S ways with man, the cruel folly of wishing back the first ages of the Church; the firm assurance of the Church's Divine origin and purpose seeing that it has lived and worked in spite of such apparently insuperable obstacles; and the faithless sinfulness of doubting that it shall "yet do greater works than these,"

Chapter iv. 4-6.

and consequently the guilty inhumanity of all who endeavour to hinder, or undo, the Church's efforts.

As, of course, you cannot run. This is the full force of the Greek phrase ('*mê suntrechontôn*'). "The sink of debauchery" denotes the excess of some swollen gutter. Ostervald translates "*debordement à la dissolution.*"

5. *To Him Who is ready.* This means exactly the 'the Lord cometh' ('*maran-atha*') of 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

The dead. Here, in the Greek word ('*nekrous*'), and in 'to the dead' ('*nekrois*') of the next verse, the term 'dead' must have the same meaning—namely the physically dead as a class, those from whose mortal bodies life has passed away, but whose souls and spirits are elsewhere existent, and await in a conscious condition, (as this verse goes to prove) the award of the Judge. To interpret, as some insist upon doing, the 'dead' as those physically dead in this verse, and then as those spiritually dead, while physically alive on earth, in verse 6, is to treat the words of Scripture in a manner so insensate as to render it an easy task to make them prove anything or nothing.

6. *To the dead.* Even to those who have passed from life on earth, to life in the world beyond, were the meaning and the effect of the Glad Tidings of access to GOD, through CHRIST, made known, to the end that they too might be fairly tried at the bar of CHRIST. By this verse we see clearly the nature and bearing of the 'proclamation' referred to in iii. 19.

With regard to flesh . . . with regard to spirit. The true contrast here, as in iii. 18, is between man's sentient life in his human flesh and his GOD-conscious life in his human spirit. In the region of the former is, and can be found, only death, "in Adam, of the earth, earthy, *all die*;" in the region of the latter is, and can only be found, life, "in CHRIST, the second Adam, the life-giving Spirit, shall *all* be made alive." Physical death does not frustrate the Purpose of GOD to the race—else had not CHRIST conquered death—and that Purpose is to bring all men to the knowledge of Himself through CHRIST, in order that they may have life—and so access to GOD in the higher part of

Chapter iv. 6-11.

their nature; "no man cometh unto the Father but by ME," CHRIST says. Compare the teaching of St. Paul in Romans viii. 10: "If CHRIST is in you, the body (in the sense of 'flesh'—see previous verses of Romans viii.) is dead, because of sin, but the spirit is life, because of righteousness." This verse closes the eschatological teaching of St. Peter with a plain enunciation of the continuity and purpose of the Divine judgments. There is no sleep of oblivion between death and judgment, nor do death and final judgment coincide in Christian theology. In the life beyond, as in this present life, men are judged (see note on i. 17) after the manner of men (*i.e.* according to their works) in their lower nature, the flesh—and this, with a curative and merciful purpose, to save them from final condemnation (*cf.* 1 Cor. v. 5, 1 Cor. xi. 32), in order that they may live after the manner determined by GOD (*i.e.* by the knowledge of Him imparted through CHRIST, the Saviour (John xvii. 3)—in their higher nature, their spirit or GOD-consciousness.

1. { Prov. x. 12 James v. 20	7.	But of all things the completion is	General exhortation to conduct within, as members of One Body; and (1st) as to Christian social duties, then (2ndly) as to trials which befall them in the contest of life. For—as ground of these exhortations—judgment is at hand, and evermore working out its purpose from the highest to the lowest. (7-19.)
2. 2 Cor. ix. 7		drawn near, be wise therefore and be	
3. Rom. xii. 6-8	8.	temperate with a view to prayer: before all things keeping towards one	
4. { 1 Cor. xii. 7 1 Cor. xiv. 12	9.	another intense love, "for love shall ¹ cover the multitude of sins." Be	
5. { Matt. v. 16 1 Cor. x. 31	10.	hospitable towards one another with- ² out murmuring. As each one received the helpful gift, so serve out towards ³ one another, as excellent stewards of the many-sided help from GOD: for ⁴ example if any speak—as the utter-	
	11.	ances of GOD, if any serve—as from the resources which GOD furnishes: in order that in all things GOD may ⁵ be glorified through JESUS CHRIST, Whose is the Glory and the Might to	

Chapter iv. 12-19.

6. 1 Cor. xi. 32	12.	the ages of the ages. So it is. Be-
7. Heb. x. 32-34		loved, be not amazed at the fiery
8. { Heb. i. 3 James ii. 2 Col. i. 27		affliction among you which is taking
9. Isa. xi. 12 (LXX)	13.	place as your test, as if something
10. Eph. iv. 28		amazing chanced to light on you :
11. Luke xii. 13-14		but to the extent in which you have
12. { Rom. xi. 21 Rom. i. 5		common lot with the sufferings of
13. Prov. xi. 31 (LXX)	14.	CHRIST, make a habit of rejoicing,
14. Luke xxiii. 46		in order that, at the disclosing of His
15. Rev. xiv. 13		Glory, you may rejoice exulting.
		When you are reproached, in the
		Name of CHRIST, you are happy—
		because the spirit of glory and that of
		GOD is abiding with you [according to
		them it is matter for evil report,
	15.	according to you for glory]. For let
		no single one of you suffer as a
		murderer, a thief, an evil-doer, or as
		a meddler in matters outside your
	16.	authority. And if as a Christian, let
		a man not be ashamed, but let him
		glorify GOD in this name. Because
	17.	it is the season for judgment to begin
		at the House of GOD : but if first at
		us, what is the end of those who
		oppugn the good-tidings of GOD ?
	18.	And “ if the righteous is with difficulty
		being saved where shall the impious
		and sinner make his appearance ? ”
	19.	Consequently let them who suffer in
		accordance with the Will of GOD
		entrust to the faithful Founder, their
		own souls in well-doing.

Chapter iv. 7-19.

(Chap. iv. 7-19.) This judgment, in the opinion of the Apostle, is close at hand. The more reason for the Christian to be sober-minded, so abstinent from the pleasures of the lower life that energy towards the higher may be unimpaired; and above all, for him to exercise love towards GOD and towards man, in order that forgiving his brother from his heart he may be himself forgiven his trespasses, and the multitude of sins pass out of sight in love—which is the fulfilling of the law. One act of love the Apostle commands as needful for the times, ungrudging hospitality; and he further generally exhorts that as each one has received from the Holy One his special gift so let him dispense the same; for example, if a man's gift be public teaching, let him teach *in accordance with the Spirit's* previous teaching in the Church of GOD; if his gift be material helpfulness, let him dispense it stewardwise, as from store entrusted to him by GOD; that in all respects GOD, Whose is the Praise and the Power, may be glorified through JESUS CHRIST, Who has revealed Him. The sufferings of the Church are inevitable, and therefore men are urged not to be thrown into a terror-

Chapter iv. 7-19.

stricken stupor—as if some prodigy was happening—at the fiery persecution daily gathering head against them : but to preserve cheerful courage in the midst of it, seeing that thereby they are associated with the Man of Sorrows, Who told them beforehand that in the world they should have tribulation, and so to persevere that when His Glory is disclosed, they may indeed exult. Wherefore, keeping in view the outcome of such suffering with CHRIST—if reviled, for the sake of CHRIST—let a man congratulate himself, for it is proof that the Spirit of Him, Who is the Hope of Glory, and of the Father, has taken up his abode with such an one [the very curses of unbelievers going to attest the wisdom of Him Who is justified of His children]. Disciples, however, are not to imagine that profession even of the true faith removes them beyond the pale of moral law—for example, none may shame the cause by suffering for cruelty or dishonesty, or as a forcer of religion by the sword, or as a doer of any evil for the imagined consequent good, or on account of that meddlesome intrigue which prostitutes religion to political party ends. Such conduct never earns the palm of real

Chapter iv. 7-19.

martyrdom. For a man to suffer as a Christian he must suffer apart from any element which could cause shame—he must suffer for the glory of GOD, as a Christian, christianwise. Wherefore that men may be nerved to suffer truly, and because a judgment beginning at earth's best and spreading to its worst, and which serves in the Church to separate real from pretended Christians, is evermore imminent, the Apostle goes on—

7. *But of all things, etc.* The connection follows from verse 5: One is ready to bring "all things" to a trial which shall show them as they really are—the guiles of the evil as well as the sorrows of the good.

Has drawn near. In one sense this statement is an error, founded on a natural though mistaken inference from our Lord's words, like that of St. John (1 John ii. 18) and, more markedly like that of St. Paul's detailed treatment of the same subject in his Thessalonian letters—a method of treatment, be it remembered, altogether absent from his latter Epistles. In another sense this statement is true: for the Church and the world live in "the last times," in a dispensation of the Spirit, which will be terminated by the realized second coming of CHRIST. That is nearer than when the Church first believed—the consummation "has drawn near" in the sense that there is nothing between it and mankind save the length or shortness of a time-period which no created being has the power of reckoning. The true aspect of the new time of transition into which the early Church found itself to be entering, and in which the new Church is still working out its destiny, is profoundly described in Heb. xii. 27-28.

Be wise . . . be temperate. Very remarkable and weighty is this advice grounded by the apostle on the end being, in his estima-

Chapter iv. 7-8.

tion, so near—and exhibits the true inspiration which apprehends the moral force of spiritual realities. There is nothing in it of the teaching of terror which the modern revivalist so affects; there is no hint of a licence for any cowardly desertion of duty on earth. On the contrary there is additional urging on to calmness of judgment and to redoubled energy in that prayer-guided course of duty which forms the true Christian sacrifice of “rational worship” (Rom. xii. 1). The expressions “sober” and “watch,” of the A.V. render neither verb correctly. The “temperance” which this advice aims at inculcating is abstinence from any *excesses* in eating, drinking, or any other animal enjoyment, not for the sake of abstinence as producing by itself a state of virtue—but that the power of prayer, that is of connection with the higher world and its King, be not dimmed nor hindered. Such true temperance is only to be gained by being “wise”—by preserving the sense of proportion—a needed preservation which the prevalent intemperance of modern total abstinence platform and pamphlet utterances goes abundantly to prove.

8. *Before all things.* ‘Love’ is the key-note of the teaching of St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul. The A.V. rendering ‘charity’ both here and in 1 Cor. xiii. has served not a little to obscure the unity of these three eminent Christian teachers on this important point. The reason why “love is the greatest” is the fact that all social life and order—all that outcome of duty towards one’s brother, without which duty towards the Great All-Father becomes an acted lie (1 St. John iv. 20), presupposes ‘love’ as its necessary condition, for “love is the filling-out of law.”

Love shall cover, etc. These words are quoted from the Hebrew version of Prov. x. 12. The fact that they are also quoted by St. James (v. 20) seems to point to the probable fact that they had become among the Jews a ‘household word.’ Dr. Plumptre notices how Shakespear’s

“The quality of mercy . . . is twice blest :
it blesseth him who gives and him who takes ”

at once illustrates, and re-echoes this ancient Eastern proverb. Its primary meaning is—that common forbearance and forgive-

Chapter iv. 8-9.

ness serve to remove offences out of the sight of GOD and man. If I am loving, I shall forgive ; if I forgive, I shall be forgiven—and thus my brother's trespasses against me, and mine against others, and our joint sins against GOD in sinning against one another (Ps. li. 4), "the multitude of sin" shall pass out of sight. And herein is the true absolving power which is the heritage of the Catholic Church (St. Matt. xvi. 19 ; St. John xx. 22, 23 ; 2 Cor. ii. 10), of which the spoken absolution of the priest is but sign and symbol. And the words carry another deep meaning : they refer to 'covering' sin by cutting it off at its source, by *prevention*, by wise love working in all regions of true reform. And the words further refer to that constant appeal to GOD, Who is (not loving only but) Love—the very Fount of Charity—to put into men helpful thoughts for the race, and counsels well-pleasing to Him, which the brain of a faithful man, who is bewildered at the ramifications of evil, must evermore send up, for "GOD is my King of old, the help that is done upon the earth, He doeth it Himself." Alford says well : "There is but one efficient cause of the hiding of sin ; but mutual love applies that cause ; draws the universal cover over the particular sin."

9. *Hospitable*. A note of the social Christian life of the times. It refers, of course, primarily to loving care for strangers and the needy of 'the household of faith,' not to ostentatious entertaining and feasting of personal friends, and still less of those from whom we hope to gain something in return. Still it must be held to include social gatherings for social purposes, such as CHRIST graced with His Presence on earth. All healthy life—and Christianity is nothing if it is not healthy—needs recreation. Such gatherings, when kept within the bounds of *real* temperance, and guided by the natural decency of rational creatures, are great agencies for drawing man to man, and from better knowledge of one another flows wider and wiser love, which must find its ultimate realizations in GOD, Whence love springs :—

First man with self, then man with man,
then man with GOD : a perfect plan.
Improve it, sceptic, if you can !

Chapter iv. 10-11.

10. *As each one received the helpful gift.* This 'gift' ('charisma') comes from the Spirit of GOD, is displayed in various activities (1 Cor. i. 7, 1 Cor. vii. 7 (with which contrast monkish laudation of the celibate life), Rom. xii. 6-8, another note of agreement between St. Peter and St. Paul) and is received into our spirits in the true Baptism (see chap. iii. 21). The emphasis in the phrase may be on 'as,' and the point will then be 'let a man do according to the nature of his gifts,' or, if the emphasis be placed on 'gift,' the meaning will be rather "as a gift is yours, become yourself a gift to others; freely you have received, freely give." (Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 7.) All men are but stewards, and their liberality, consequently, is exercised not in their own but in their Master's goods—which should check them in the course of a duteous 'serving out' from any pride or boasting. The very expression 'excellent stewards' forms a reminiscence of our Lord's teaching as recorded in Luke xiv. 1-12, xii. 42. 'Serve out' includes all the charitable works of the Christian life. Strength to so serve is 'furnished' (the Greek word expresses a power of munificent subsidizing) by GOD, largely and liberally—the Christian worker, therefore, is GOD'S steward.
11. *As the utterances of GOD.* This would connote to St. Peter's readers the already received revelation, namely the Old Testament (Rom. iii. 2), certain of St. Paul's Epistles (2 Peter iii. 16)—probably also the Book of Revelation, together with that recognised round of oral teaching, "principles of the beginning of the utterances of GOD" (Heb. v. 12), whence the Gospels and the Book of Acts were in time to be compiled, and for the further illustration and elucidation of which the other books of the New Testament canon were written and collected. In accordance with the *united spirit* of these utterances, not with their *literal and isolated* meaning (Rom. xii. 6 (Revision), 2 Cor. iii. 6, cf. St. John vi. 63), the man who now has the gift of teaching is to teach, just as, in St. Peter's day, a man was then to teach according to the proportion of such revelation as he then possessed. But the expression "as utterances" bears a yet deeper significance than any mere *formal* accord with the

Chapter iv. 11-13.

teaching of Scripture, and still more than any adoption of Scriptural phraseology. It points on to the necessity which underlies all true Christian teaching of recognition, by the teacher, that GOD is the Source of whatsoever man may be enabled truly to teach. "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be the praise!" These words are the condemnation of all those unwise displays of the much-vaunted rights of 'private judgment'—private judgment being, after all, the judgment of a savage, and its undue exercise a relapse into barbarism, and tending to the division consequent on such a fall. Hence what is known as the "dissidence of dissent." Nothing is further from the Apostolic idea of the Catholic Church than that individual members of it by the will-worship of conceit, and the affectation of superior insight, should throw into confusion—instead of building up and illustrating by their labours—"the faith once delivered to the saints."

Whose. GOD'S—for He is the main subject of the sentence. This ascription of praise—which "cannot wait for utterance"—is another note of the like-mindedness of St. Peter and St. Paul.

12. *Be not amazed*—that is, 'do not think it alien to the lot of CHRIST and His followers,' as St. Peter himself had once thought, when he said to his Master: GOD have mercy (Heb. viii. 12) on Thee, LORD; this shall never be to Thee (St. Matt. xvi. 22). The 'fiery' nature of the affliction is illustrated by chap. i. 7, and for the lesson that to Christians affliction ought not to be 'amazing,' compare St. John xvi. 33, Acts xiv. 22, 2 Tim. iii. 12.
13. *Sufferings of CHRIST.* The sufferings of CHRIST which He underwent on earth for mankind, and still feels on account of the imperfection of the race. In these sufferings—the "deadness, or putting to death (not 'dying'), of the LORD JESUS" (2 Cor. iv. 10)—each faithful Christian shares (Col. i. 24). The being able to rejoice in the midst of suffering is a present disclosing of the Glory of CHRIST, for He said "I have overcome the world," and the man who can really rejoice in the midst of his tribulations, already shares in the victory. The

Chapter iv. 13-15.

advice to make a habit of rejoicing in such circumstances is doubtless a reminiscence of the beatitude recorded in St. Matt. v. 11-12.

14. *Reproached.* The fact emphasized is that the reviling results in glory, not dishonour. It is possible to so translate the Greek as to give the sense "because the principle of glory (hence perhaps the Vulgate reading '*quod est gloria*') and the Spirit of GOD," etc. This 'principle of glory' is the opposite to, and yet finds its origin in, the 'offence of the Cross.' But it seems that CHRIST'S is the 'Spirit of Glory' referred to (see references); and the happiness of the disciple consists in the abiding Presence of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with him (St. John xiv. 23). The latter part of verse 14 is not found in the best MSS., nor in the Vulgate Version. It is, perhaps, best regarded as a marginal note which has found its way, by some transcriber's error, into the text. It contains, however, a great truth. The higher life, in the presence of GOD, is the Christian's cause for glory—the savour of life unto life to him: at the same time it is the unbeliever's cause for cursing the Christian as unsocial and dangerous, and so becomes the savour of death unto death to this latter. "The blasphemy of the persecutor and the doxology of the sufferer are complements one of the other" (Plumptre). The 'exulting,' of verse 13, expresses the contrast of the Christian's future state in contradistinction to that 'rejoicing in sorrow' which had been his educational discipline.

15. *For let no single one of you, etc.* Recognition of the right of the civil power to punish crimes against the community. (Cf. Rom. xiii. 2-4.) Not the suffering, but the cause, makes the martyr.

Meddler, etc. Literally 'other peoples' overseers' ('*allotrio-episcopi*'), a term which does not so much mean people of indiscreet zeal in religious matters (Rénan), nor the prying religiosity (Farrar) of the narrow-minded—though it would include such—but rather, occurring as it does in a list of offenders against civil order—those who assume authority in purely secular matters (see the reference in St. Luke), and so become guilty of contempt

Chapter iv. 15-17.

of court and obstruction of justice. Herein all papal aggression stands emphatically condemned.

16. *In this name.* That is, 'of a Christian;' or, more probably, as carrying on the thought from verse 14, "when you are reproached in the Name of CHRIST"—because you confess CHRIST as GOD (cf. iii. 15)—"in the Name of JESUS." The best MSS. read 'in this Name'—but others 'on this behalf'—that is to say on account of sufferings brought on a man by his religious profession. So the A.V., Ostervald, "qu'il en glorifie Dieu;" Luther, "in solchen Fall." Dr. Plumptre has an excellent note on this verse of which the following is a condensation: 'Christian'—as a name—was bestowed upon the followers of CHRIST by the heathen. They called *themselves* 'brothers,' 'saints,' 'those of the way.' By the Jews they were called 'Nazarenes.' The name Christian was first used of them as a body in Antioch (Acts .xi. 26), and the fact indicates that the outside world was beginning to take cognizance of their existence. It became gradually adopted as a title of honour among believers, both as a distinctive mark of the follower of CHRIST, and also as signifying the temper of goodness and gentleness from its supposed derivation from the Greek term 'chrēstos.' (See note on ii. 3.)
17. *Season for judgment, etc.* The judgment here spoken of seems to be that retributive penalty which falls upon all neglect of duty, not the universal judgment of the Great Assize, which is itself a time not *necessarily* of condemnation but rather of separation. We have become too apt to confound judgment with condemnation. Many commentators see in this verse St. Peter's belief (which, if he held it, we know was erroneous) that he was living in times close to the end of the world. (Cf. ii. 12, iv. 7.) The expression 'House of GOD' means undoubtedly His Family—"the household of faith"—once represented by the Jewish polity, which was essentially ecclesiastical, and since by the true Catholic Church (1 Tim. iii. 15)—the Spiritual House of ii. 5. The season (as of an event which will pass over) for this judgment begins at the House of GOD, because He designs to

Chapter iv. 17.

chastise (Heb. xii. 6, cf. 2 Thess. i. 4-5) His worthiest and best for their advantage—while to His defiant and rebellious children He reserves the terrible “penalty of permission,” for a time, to their evil courses: “Ephraim is joined unto idols, let him alone.” The comfort to the persecuted Christian is the thought of escape from the weight of God’s just displeasure, not the terrible fate which overtakes the persecutor. The verse, however, may be very fairly taken to apply especially to the Jewish dispensation. The cleansing of the sanctuary, as foreshadowed by CHRIST’S cleansings of the Temple-courts would be the first act in this process of judgment. The beginning of the end would be symbolised by the rending of the Temple veil—the destruction of Jerusalem being the final act; a time not necessarily of universal condemnation of the whole system of the Jewish ecclesiastical polity, but of its thorough reformation, of the separation of the wheat from the chaff in it, and of its rehabilitation as the Catholic Church—the cleansing labour of the fan of the Son of God. (Matt. iii. 12.) The argument of the verse seems to be: If the people of the Jewish régime are to be visited with such penal retribution (‘damnation’ in the N.T. *never* meaning ‘everlasting perdition’) for not living up to their light, and if a similar scrutiny of judgment awaits us who now form His House, what will be the end of those who disobey the brighter Light of CHRIST? A question which requires the answer: A severer and more searching measure of retribution—because the worse the disease, the more difficult the cure. (Cf. Rom. xi. 22.) Notice carefully that St. Peter makes no assertion as to the *ultimate fate* of these rebellious ones. He makes none, because he did not know—and neither does any man, or any body of men, know now. Like Judas, rebels and traitors will doubtless go to their “own place,” and the very fact that what that ‘place’ is is unknown raises thoughts more terrible to offenders than any unfounded assertions as to its nature can possibly raise; for the simple reason that the unknown must always be terrible to man. This should carry its lesson to those who so loudly accuse the holders of the Larger Hope of doing away with the wholesome terror of

Chapter iv. 17-18.

the future punishment of sin. We should shudder to do anything of the sort—because by so doing we should ourselves be rebels from truth; we assert the punishment of sin to be inevitable, here and hereafter; GOD, we hold, never weakly “lets off;” but we decline altogether to go beyond the lead of conscience, Scripture, and the Catholic Faith, and to describe as unending and of a certain and definite nature, that which GOD has not yet seen fit to reveal to us in determinate terms. In the fabled ‘hell’ of popular dogmatic teaching all, save a few weak-minded, who are frenzied by such imaginations into anything but that ‘perfect love which casts out fear’ decline to believe, and to the masses generally it has long since been an object of profanest ridicule. In the possible-enough severity of a righteous and corrective punishment hereafter—if not here—those who know their lives to be godless cannot help believing, and consequently they dislike to be reminded of it. Hence the wondrous pertinacity with which formalists will defend the old-school teachings about material hell-torments. They do not mind being told of things generally discredited, but they strongly object to have conscience

“ That accent of the Holy Ghost
which foolish worlds have never lost ”

made active in them, by the teachings of Catholic Truth, which show that ‘hell’ is not so much a place as a state, and that it is too often quite unnecessary to wait for death before a man can enter into it. Spiritually and morally the current, popular and false, teachings on this subject are directly responsible for the general disbelief in the terrible nature and consequences of sin; all the same it remains eternally untrue that “the fear of hell will ever serve to people heaven.”

18. *If the righteous, etc.* One of the very few places where the term ‘righteous’ is applied to Christians, and only here in an adapted quotation. The LXX. Version of Prov. xi. 31, from which St. Peter quotes, is very different from the Hebrew, removing as it does the scope of retributive penalty from this world on into the world beyond. “With difficulty” raises no expression of

Chapter iv. 18—v. 5.

doubt of the *possibility* of salvation, but only of wonder at the issue—owing to the sharpness of the trial, and the weakness of those who undergo it.

Make his appearance. That is, 'be where he will be seen as he really is.' The same sense attaches to 'appear' in 2 Cor. v. 10.

19. *Consequently.* That is to say, seeing suffering results not from any arbitrary fate, nor from any blind chance, but from GOD'S way of teaching His creatures obedience. (See note on i. 6.) It is part of the plan of the Divine Author of man to re-create him perfect man. The Greek for the 'Creator' of the A.V. ('ktistēs') is not found elsewhere in the N.T. It is therefore marked in our translation by an unusual word. It occurs in the LXX. Version of Eccles. xxiv. 8, of the "Inventor of Wisdom."

1. { 2 Johu i. 3 Johu i.	C. v.	1. The presbyters, therefore, among you	Special and final exhortation to the leaders to lead faithfully, to the led to follow faithfully, and to a common humility-clad faithfulness.
2. 1 Pet. i. 7		I exhort, who am a fellow-presbyter	
3. John xxi. 16		and witness of the sufferings of	
4. 1 Cor. ix. 16-17		CHRIST, who also am a sharer in	
5. John x. 2-5		the Glory about to be disclosed,	
6. 1 Pet. i. 9		shepherd the little flock of GOD	(v. 1-7.)
7. 2 Tim. iv. 8		among you: taking oversight not	
8. { Prov. iii. 34: James iv. 6	LXX	perforce but willingly, nor yet with a	
		view to shameful gain but readily;	
		not as playing the tyrant over your	
		several congregations, but as those	
		who have become models to the flock.	
		And when the Head Shepherd shall	
		have been manifested you shall carry	
		off the crown of glory that never	
		fades. Likewise do you juniors be	
		subject to the presbyters; and do	
		you all one towards another tie on	
		humility as a knotted cloak, because	
		"GOD resists the overweening,	
		but gives the humble His real Help."	

Chapter v. 1-7.

<p>9. { Ps. lv. 22: LXX. Matt. vi. 25-34</p>	<p>6. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the strong hand of GOD, in order that He may exalt you in due season,</p> <p>7. "casting the whole of your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you "</p>	
	<p>(Chap. v. i.) to charge the ministry, and exhorts the superior ranks of the clergy to the due discharge of all the duties of their pastoral office. He does this as their fellow-priest, claiming, indeed, additional weight from the fact that he had been with JESUS, as witness of His Sufferings, and also as sharing with them in a common hope of the Glory yet to be disclosed. 2-4. They are then, to tend in all the various functions of their office the little flock of GOD, under their respective charge, assuming such oversight of their own free-will, not under any compulsion, least of all from desire of social or material gain instead of in the free spirit which gives rather than sells its services—and behaving in such fashion as themselves to set the model of good living rather than to exercise the tyranny of power over their people. In such conduct of their office they will carry off, when the Chief Pastor of the Church is disclosed, in all the glory of His High Priesthood, in lieu of the transient prize of power or gain, the fadeless</p>	

Chapter v. 1-7.

crown of glory. 5-7. With a like purpose of discharge of duty let, the Apostle advises, the subordinate clergy be duly submissive to their superiors, and, indeed, let all, clergy and laity alike, seeing all are GOD'S men, be subject to the interests of all in furtherance of their common aim. All, then, must gird around them with knots the vesture of humility—that vessel of real helpfulness—which conceals, reveals, and keeps together the virtues deriving their efficacy from GOD, Who helps those who acknowledge Him in all their ways, but resists those who, in the impotence of fancied power, forget that man's glory is to be dependent on his Maker. Let all, therefore, be submissive under the strong government of God, often revealed in chastisement, in order that, when He sees fit, they may go up higher: and for the interim let them cast—as the Psalmist told them—all their (often short-sighted and excessive) anxiety upon Him Who cares for them with a ceaseless Providence.

1. *Therefore.* This is the reading of the better MSS., and serves to carry out the argument. Men—needing men to teach them—are to be strengthened by their spiritual guides in well-doing, and so best aided to prepare for the coming judgment of all.

Chapter v. 1-2.

- Presbyters.* A technical term, describing the higher order of clergy among the earliest Christian communities. That it is interchangeable with bishop, or overseer, is seen from the expression 'taking oversight' in verse 2, and is well illustrated by Acts xx. 28, where St. Paul exhorts the elders or presbyters of the Ephesian Churches (Acts xx. 17) whom he had specially sent for to Miletus, as "bishops (or overseers) to *tend* the Church of GOD." It is the title St. John gives to himself in two of his letters. Compare with the modesty of St. Peter's language, 'fellow-presbyter,' the insolent assumption of the 'Supreme Pontiff' and 'Infallible Head of the Church' of his self-styled successors. (Cf. note on i. 1.) The distinguishing mark of the most prominent of the Lord's Apostles is that he has seen "something of the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST"—and so can describe himself as a witness of CHRIST'S sufferings, and a sharer in the consequent certain, though perhaps distant (St. John xiii. 36), Glory, Which was about to be disclosed.
2. *Shepherd.* That is to say, tend fully in the exercise of all the pastoral office. And this is to be done with respect to the little flock of GOD among them—they are not to be 'overseeing' other men's flocks (cf. iv. 15). The word 'shepherd' was, in all probability, suggested to the Apostle's mind by the remembrance of the scene described in St. John xxi. 15-18, which passage would gain so much illustration, and convey so much richer teaching, to English readers, by more accurate translation, that we cannot refrain from an endeavour to place it before them. "When, therefore, they had broken their fast JESUS says to Simon Peter: O Simon, son of Jona, *likest* thou Me more than these others?" (as thy boast was: St. Matt. xxvi. 33, St. xiii. 37) "He says to Him: Yea, Lord: Thou knowest that I *love* Thee. He says to him: Feed My lambs. He says to him, again the second time: O Simon, son of Jona, *likest* thou Me? He says to Him: Yea, Lord: Thou knowest that I *love* Thee. He says to him: Shepherd My sheep. He says to him yet again, the third time: O Simon, son of Jona, *lovest* thou Me? And Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time '*lovest* thou

Chapter v. 2-3.

Me,' and said to Him : Lord, all things thou knowest : Thou art conscious that I *love* Thee. JESUS says to him : Feed My sheep." For the deep lessons of these words, see a most beautifully suggestive work by Canon Westcott called "The Revelation of the Risen Lord."

Shameful gain. Here is a note of the social state of the early Church. High place had already brought with it its own peculiar snare, and the presbyter's office was sufficiently gainful to make it an object of desire to the envious. Cf. 1 Tim. v. 17, where "double honour" is generally considered to mean double the support in money, or in kind, given to other officers of the Church. For illustration as to how such 'shameful gains' are worked see 2 Tim. iii. 6, Tit. i. 10-11.

3. *Not as playing, etc.* There is an alliterative force in the original which might be thus reproduced : "not as lording it over your lots."

Congregations. Greek, 'klêroi' : lots—priests and people conjoined, and yet distributed in regular order into various dioceses, parishes, churches, and congregations, like as Bishop Wordsworth well observes, the duly-ordered companies to which our Lord distributed the loaves and fishes by the hands of the Apostles. Luther's strong common sense led him to translate this by the homely 'das Volk.' The history of the word, as shown by Dr. Plumptre, is curious. First of all meaning a 'lot'—in the sense of a twig or potsherd with which to vote—it then came to mean the position, or thing, assigned by lot. Then separate bodies joining for common worship were regarded as the 'lots' of their respective presbyters. Then, partly through priestly love of power, and partly from the fact that chiefly in their ranks was to be found whatever of learning and virtue there was in the community, the 'lots' became absorbed in the overseers, and the very term 'klêroi' got to mean the overseers only, whence our English 'clergy,' 'clerk,' 'clerical.' Hence, too, the term was applied to any person of learning, while, now-a-days by the irony of fate, the word 'clerk' is restricted—save in the legal term, 'clerk in Holy Orders'—to those whose duty lies in the almost mechanical work of office-routine.

Chapter v. 3-5.

Models. This idea is borrowed from the school of sculpture, as the 'pattern,' of ii. 21, came from the drawing-school. The true pastor is to be "as a spiritual image to exemplify the beauty of every good work."

5. *Juniors.* Doubtless this word primarily means younger in age, but it also implies those of less responsible position and experience, and so the subordinate rank of the clergy—the deacons and lay readers of the Catholic Church. The statements in these verses afford a fairly clear intimation of a settled and duly ordered ministry in the Christian Churches of Asia Minor in these early days.

All...tie on...as a knotted cloak. This seems to us to refer to congregations generally—lay as well as clerical. And it is the absence of this 'humility towards one another' which so largely hinders the good working of the Church. Instead of the furtherance of GOD'S Glory and man's greater good becoming the common aim of all in our churches, it is too often found that the object of the clergy is to keep the layman in his place, while the layman's object is to carp at the action of his clergy. This latter object is especially seen in that senseless charge so often brought against clergymen of "teaching over the people's heads." As if it was not the very *raison d'être* of any body of teachers to raise the taught above their common, every-day estimate of things. As a rule this cry means, not we cannot understand, but we do not choose to do so. For those very ones who but a moment ago complained that the teaching was above them, will a few minutes after declare that they do not require any one to tell them their duty; they know well enough what it is without any clerical interference. Of all prayers (saving only the CHRIST-taught model of all prayer) in the Book of Common Prayer, that most searching one in the Accession Service "for Unity" ("O GOD, the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST," etc.) should be often on the lips, and in the spirits of priest and people alike. It was by true humility that St. Peter 'magnified his office,' as we have seen in verse 1 of this chapter—and for a similar spirit of humility, breathing to the fulness the declaration

Chapter v. 5-11.

of the Baptist: "He must increase, I must decrease," compare how St. Paul also estimated wherein the pre-eminence of the apostolate consisted in 1 Thess. ii. 6-7. But the highest example of the "knotting on of humility" is the incident of our Blessed Lord girding Himself with a towel to wash the disciples' feet.

7. The connexion with the preceding verses is to be found in the truth that all undue anxiety—that which we know as "worry"—is a contradiction of true humility. Be humble under GOD'S Will if you desire to escape a life of restless weariness.

1. Mark xiii. 37	8.	Be temperate, be watchful: your enemy ¹ —the Slanderer—as a raging lion, goes about seeking whom to gorge down ;	Parting counsels, warnings, and prayers. (8-11.)
2. Eph. vi. 16			
3. 1 Cor. x. 13			
4. { 2 Cor. i. 3-4 Ps. lxxiv. 12	9.	whom stand up against, firm as re- gards the faith, aware that this same ² sort of sufferings is being accomplished for the brotherhood which is in the ³ world ; and the GOD of all real help, ⁴	
5. Rom. viii. 18			
6. 1 Pet. iv. 11	10.	Who called you into His age-long glory in CHRIST JESUS, after your having suffered awhile, shall Him- self reform, strengthen, confirm, and ⁵ establish you. To Him belong the ⁶ glory and the might unto the ages of the ages. So it is.	
	11.		
		(Chap. v. 8-11.) Still, while dismissing worry, they are not to be careless. Trusting GOD — the Good Spirit— does not mean leaving open the out- posts to the devil, whose spirit is evil. Wherefore let them be temperate with true abstinence which subdues flesh to spirit, because their adversary, the slandrous accuser of the brother-	

Chapter v. 8-11.

hood of man, like some fierce and insatiable beast of prey, is ever on the trail for victims. Him they are to withstand, guarded by that Might of GOD Which faith makes a man's very own, and nerved by the thought that they are fighting the same fight as the rest of CHRIST'S Church Militant here in earth. Finally, the apostle declares his assurance that GOD—the King of the help done on earth—Who has called men to His age-long Glory by their union with CHRIST JESUS, will after the inevitable and necessary discipline of the lower life, correct what is amiss, strengthen what is weak, confirm what is good, and finally establish man, redeemed and perfected, in unending bliss. To Him belongs all glory, for His, without controversy, is the Power Which pervades the ages.

8. *Be watchful.* One had once said to the very writer of this letter :
Simon sleepest thou ? Couldst thou not watch one hour ?
(St. Mark xiv. 37.)

The Slanderer. Diabolus—the adversary and, especially in those times of persecution, the false accuser of the brethren. He is personified as a raging lion, and finds his victor in the ‘Lion that is of the tribe of Judah’ (Rev. v. 5). He is also described as ‘going about seeking.’ Hence we see the necessity for being within one of the folds—and so of the One Flock—of the Good Shepherd. It is quite true that the enemy may try to force, and does indeed at times succeed in forcing, the entrance to these folds on earth, but into the true Flock above, of which these

Chapter v. 8-14.

earthly folds are but imperfect symbols, never can he penetrate, and even on earth it is obvious that stragglers from the folds are in the greatest danger of his attacks. CHRIST is Himself the true Fold of the Sheep, as well as the true Shepherd: hence His "without (*i.e.* outside of) Me ye can do nothing."

9. *Firm as regards the faith.* "Taking up the shield of faith," says St. Paul "wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one." So, too, here counsels Simon, the sifted (St. Luke xxii. 31), who has become truly Peter—the rock-man—and who had learnt by such bitter experience the effects alike of the presence, and of the loss, of the central principle of faith.
10. *Reform, etc.* This shows another instance of that careful selection of terms (*cf.* among other places i. 4, i. 7, ii. 1) and of the condensation which is so characteristic of St. Peter. 'Reform'—bring what is damaged into perfect order (Ps. li. 10-12); 'strengthen'—endue what is reformed with active and lasting power (St. Luke xxii. 32, wherein notice CHRIST'S very word to Peter passed on by him to his brother man, with recognition as to Whence alone such strength comes); "confirm"—cement with inner peace (Eph. iii. 16); "establish"—found and ground upon the Rock (St. Matt. xvi. 18), the 'reformed' man who has been 'strengthened' in well-doing by the aid of the 'confirming'; Spirit Which had been bestowed upon him.

1. { Gal. i. 11-12 1 Cor. xv. 1 2. Gal. v. 1 3. Rom. xvi. 13	12. By Silvanus, the faithful brother (as I deem) I have written in brief to you, ¹ exhorting and witnessing that this is the true Help of GOD; entering into which, stand. She at Babylon, co- ² elect with you, salutes you, and so does Marcus, my son. ³ Salute one another with the kiss of love. 14. Peace be to you all who are in CHRIST JESUS. So let it be.	Postscript. (12-14.
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(Chap. v. 12-14). As a postscript—that the readers may recognize the letter as his—the Apostle names the faithful Silvanus as its bearer, and declares it to describe the true grace of GOD, by which Christians stand. He also sends to his readers, under the mystical name of Babylon, the greeting of the Church of Rome, exhorting them to unaffected and pure love among themselves. Finally, the Apostle commends one and all to that Peace which surpasses man's present conceptions, and which springs from perfect union with the Anointed Saviour of the world.

12. *As I deem.* This shows that St. Peter in the exercise of his rational judgment (cf. St. Paul's 'reckon' in Rom. viii. 18) considers Silvanus—well-known, to those to whom the Apostle of the circumcision is sending him, as the companion of the great Apostle of the Gentiles—worthy of all esteem and trust. Another point of harmony between the two Apostles. For Silvanus is, in all probability, the same as the Silas of the book of Acts, and who also was associated with St. Paul in writing the two epistles to the Thessalonians. He here reappears in company with St. Mark, whom he displaced, while St. Mark is again shown to be with St. Paul (2 Tim. iv. 11). A lesson as to how the grace of God corrects the infirmities of men. Some consider that Silvanus is to be considered rather as St. Peter's amanuensis than the bearer of his letter, but there is no reason why we should not regard him as acting in both these capacities.
13. *She at Babylon co-elect.* Alford and others consider this expression to refer to St. Peter's wife, but it seems highly improbable. 'She co-elect' would surely better apply to a collective body of

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the same character as that addressed at the beginning of the letter—"to the elected dwellers." 'She' will then stand for 'Church' or, perhaps, 'Dispersion.' The words 'at Babylon' have given rise to no little disputing. The largest number of commentators are of opinion that Babylon on the Euphrates is the place meant. Some consider Babylon to refer to a small Egyptian fortification, others that it means Ctesiphon on the Tigris, others, Seleucia. The statement that our Apostle was ever either on the banks of the Euphrates or of the Tiber is based solely on tradition, so that it is quite impossible to make any positive assertion as to the true meaning. Still there is an undoubtedly greater weight of traditional evidence for the statement that St. Peter was about this time at Rome; reliable ancient writers such as Papias, Clement of Alexandria, and Jerome state positively that 'Babylon' here means Rome; and Rome certainly seems referred to under the mystical name of Babylon in Rev. xiv. 8, xvii. 1-10, which work was, it seems, written before this letter. There would be good reason for the use of a mystical name, for in the growing suspicions of the government the employment of the literal name would be fraught with danger to bearers, readers and writers, and especially to the Christian community in the Imperial City—that place which in its far-reaching power and in the spreading terror of its cruel domination was regarded as the centre of anti-Christian influence. (Cf. the use of mystical language for political reasons in 2 Thess. ii. 3-10.) Hence the great courage of St. Paul must attack Rome also—and, if our conjecture be right, we find St. Peter at his side. Cosmas (a sixth-century traveller and writer) quotes this verse as showing the progression of Christianity in very early days beyond the pale of the Empire, and says that by Babylon the Apostle did *not* mean Rome—which statement is proof conclusive that the expression had been so understood in and before his day. On the whole we incline to the opinion that Rome is meant.

14. St. Paul generally closes his letters with the prayer for real help to *all*. That real help is in CHRIST, and forms the heritage of

His Body, 'which is the blessed company of all faithful people,' and would result in the peace St. Peter desires for them. We have seen how universal is St. Peter's conception of the Saviour's Work, and therefore his parting word, like that of his brother Apostle, amounts to a prayer for Catholic Blessing breathed by Catholic Hope.

THE END.